THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1821. THE GREAT FAMILY PAPER FOR HALF A CENTURY. 1873.

Vol. LII. H. PETERSON & CO.,} No. 319 Walnut Street. PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1873. TERMS} $3.00 a Year in Advance. Single Number, 6 Cents. } No. 27.

MY NIGHT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

BY EDITH BOUTILER.

Over the snow-clad hills we sped,
Lighted by moonbeams tender,
And countless stars soft splendors shed,
And skeleton branches overhead
Threw shadows long and slender
Across our path that stretched away
To where the village sleeping lay.

Oh! if that night could but return,
Full of the olden sweetness
Of shadowy pine, and frozen fern,
Nought would be left to live or learn
Out of my joy's completeness,
If in this new moon's mellow light,
Could come to me out of the past—my night.

Oh! snows you may whiten a hundred hills,
And stars you may crown your skies with glory,
But the tones that linger, the touch that thrills,
And the past, the innermost heart that fills,
Is an unforgotten story
And moonlight pales in the warmer light
Of the love that brightened and blessed my night.

RAVENSWOOD;

OR,

The Raftsmen Of The Delaware.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BURR THORNBURY.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE QUAKER HOMESTEAD.

Only a mile from Ravenswood was the home of Edith Williams. It was a great stone farmhouse, the centre of comfort and abundance, exceeded not by the island estate itself in these respects. But though Plenty poured her fulness alike around the two places, there was something distinguishing and peculiar belonging to each. *Peace* was the expression of all in and about the Quaker homestead—peace in its atmosphere, in its aspect, and in the principles of its occupants.

The house was comfortably furnished in plain, country style, without any approach toward luxury, though the wealth of its owners would have permitted indulgence in many of the "vanities" of the world.

The charm of the spot was its exquisite neatness and order, its inviting, home-like look, and that Heavenly quietness which one would think was not elsewhere to be found.

Wide, fertile fields lay around it; and, leading from the highway to the mansion and farm-buildings was a long, shaded lane, with a fence as white as lime annually applied could make it. This avenue of trees afforded a delightful drive and promenade during the months of summer. Half way between the house and the hills that fronted it, was a broad meadow, in spring a rich and even green, through which ran a little live brook, pebble-strewn and moss-fringed, and with waters crystal clear.

A fountain, fed from the cool hillside, played summer and winter in front of the mansion door, and was during the warmer months a conspicuous and attractive object.

In the rear was the kitchen garden, though it was not exclusively devoted to the production of vegetables and small fruits, but a portion, according to the country fashion in those days, was allotted to the cultivation of flowers—such dear old-fashioned flowers as would to-day delight the hearts of our grandmothers.

A long line of straw bee-hives was here arranged, stored with the sweets of orchard, garden and field. Behind the garden lay the orchard, yielding juicy, mellow, faultless fruit, as few orchards do in these "degenerate" times. In mid-summer, or before, great white harvest apples, pearmains and other famed varieties abounded; later, bell-flowers—such as now we see not—fall pippins, russets and greenings loaded the branches, and displayed their many colors to the autumn sun.

At that season clustering around the barn were to be seen immense stacks and ricks of grain and hay, denoting an abundant harvest. Sleek cattle roamed the fields, and well-fed horses stood in the stables.

It was a spot flowing, as the poetical old Scriptural figure describes another land, with milk and honey.

Into this rural paradise of peace and plenty, Frank Leighton had gone and won the affections of its fairest inmate.

Frank was one of "the world's people;" that is, he was not a member of the simple religious body to which his betrothed belonged. This fact might have prevented his future union with Edith, for the discipline of the Society of Friends forbids the marriage of its sons and daughters with the sons and daughters of other sects; but the parents of the lovely Quakeress were eminently sensible people, and they could not oppose the pure workings of the natural heart, on the narrow ground of sectarian scruples. When they found that their cherished child and noble-hearted Frank Leighton had become all in all to each other, they attempted no autocratic interference, but accepted the young man as their future son-in-law, with, it may be added, an unexpressed delight at the result. For they felt that with none other would the happiness of their darling be safer.

The question of "the Meeting's" disapprobation, it is true, disquieted them; but a way, and perhaps a wide and pleasant way, would open from that trouble, for Frank Leighton, apart from the sweet influence of Edith, had been drawn into affinity with many of the doctrines and principles of the society, and, being a member of no other religious organization, the probability was that he would eventually unite with it. He might never assume the garb, speech and other externals of the simple sect, but he had a true reverence for, and a true affiliation with, their more important spiritual tenets.

This, then, was his position with the family—he was the accepted lover of Edith,

THE PEDDLER.

and an honored and welcome visitor with all. Frank there was perfectly at home. Rarely an evening came—except during his absence from the neighborhood—that did not find him at the door of the dear old homestead; and he entered as informally as he would cross his own threshold. If Edith did not at once appear, he seated himself with her Aunt Margaret, an unwedded lady of a disposition as sweet and generous as if she had not been one of that commiserated class known as old maids.

"How is thee, Franklin?" was her invariable form of greeting, but in so sweet a tone that our young friend wondered sometimes how it happened that so soft a voice had never given the responsive "yea" to love's momentous question.

If Aunt Margaret was absent or engaged, and Edith was not yet seen, Frank would saunter out to chat with Friend Robert, or seek the great kitchen, where he was almost sure to find the placid mother of the household. And Deborah Williams, though she was more than faithful in the discharge of her domestic duties, was not wanting socially. In kitchen or parlor she was alike agreeable—one of the most domestic, most social and most worthy of her sex and sect.

If the tea-table, exquisitely neat in its plain appointments, was set at the period of Frank's arrival, and the family were about to gather around it, no one thought it necessary to give him an invitation to join them, beyond what was extended to others; but he seated himself at the place that was always left for him, with the ease and familiarity of the rest.

How delightful to be on terms of such intimacy with a refined and cultivated family! Who of us has not enjoyed at some period of our lives this pleasurable and Christianizing intercourse? Nothing is more educating in a social way, nothing more grateful to look back upon in after days.

It was a spirit-like afternoon in middle April—Saturday, or, as Friends prefer, "Seventh-day." Philip Wayne and Frank Leighton had presented themselves at Edith's home, in response to a special invitation to take tea with the family.

Flossa and Edith were together in an upper chamber, preparing to receive their visitors. The former had now been several days amid her new surroundings, and had already endeared herself to the entire household, as indeed the household had endeared itself to her.

She was Edith's "sister"—that was her position. Among almost any other people, the poor girl, notwithstanding the most sincere and cordial assurances of welcome, would probably have felt herself placed in strange and anomalous relations. With her Quaker friends this feeling had no existence. Received as an equal, sheltered as one of their own family circle, the change in her condition was indeed a joyous one. She breathed the blessed atmosphere of home, and as freely as if that roof had always been above her.

For warmth and delicacy of hospitality; for Christian care of the needy and suffering; for protection of the hunted and oppressed; for the tenderest humanity toward unfortunates, of high or low degree, let the palm be given to the unostentatious religious body of which the Williamses were members.

"It seems to me as if I had *always* lived with you, Edith," said Flossa. "I dreaded to go, even from enemies, to strangers; but you have not permitted me to retain that distressful feeling. How kind you all are! And I an idler and intruder among you."

"Flossa!" cried Edith, in tones of gentle reproach. "Not a word of that kind," she then added, with smiling imperativeness, "or Philip shall know what an unquiet guest we have."

This arch threat had its effect, for Flossa would not have her lover think that she was unrestful in the refuge that had been found for her. Such was not the case, as we have already said, though it was natural that she should give some expression to her sense of obligation. That, no more than her gratitude, was to be repressed.

Completing their simple toilets, the two girls descended to the sitting-room—the favorite apartment of the house, where informal visitors were usually received.

A strong but harmonizing contrast they presented as they entered—Flossa with her fresh, flower-like beauty, so like that of a wild rose, and Edith lovely as a lily. The admiring looks that met them showed the sensibility of their lovers to their unaffected charms.

Of course there was the most animated exchange of greetings. After that, quiet, sparkling or tender talk, according to the subject, and altogether the most pleasurable time imaginable.

Flossa inquired of Philip concerning Starway, who after parting from his fellow-voyagers, had gone his way, refusing to tarry at the home of either Frank or Philip, but saying that they should soon hear of him again.

"We have had no word from him as yet," was the answer, "but I look for his re-appearance any day. He will not forget us, Flossa, you may rest assured."

"I do not apprehend that," she said, confidently.

"Since my arrival home," continued Philip, "I have made some inquiries in relation to him. He appears to be little known, except among the raftsmen, with whom he is very popular. Some of them assert that he is a man of large wealth, holding much property in the lower river-towns. It may be attention to this that causes his occasional absence from his usual associations. He is reticent concerning these matters, but he has shown us his heart; and a true heart it is. Oh, that lost and loved ones might be restored to him! Do you ever think, Flossa, that it may yet be proved that you are his child?"

"Only the child of his affections, Philip," replied she a little sadly. "Starway himself entertains the thought only as a fancy. Instinct does not incline me toward him as to my own father. No, no, Philip, I am still a waif, whatever the future may reveal."

"But as dear to me as if you were a queen's daughter," he whispered.

"Yet I long to have this mystery that attends me solved. But Starway is not my father—I am sure of that, though he has been more than a parent to me."

Philip looked perplexed; and, supper being announced, the subject was dropped, as it had frequently been before, with no satisfying conclusions.

The family and their guests were soon gathered around the well-spread board, the central attraction of which was that most appetizing and substantial of springtime delicacies—a pair of nicely-cooked Delaware shad, the first of the season. Not such diminutive specimens were they as are now-a-days usually taken from that stream; but fish fit to be offered at a feast of the patriarchs.

Edith's father, a man of benevolent aspect, in whose calm countenance the light of the inward peace was revealed, occupied the head of the table. His wife, near him at his left hand, busied herself with the teathings, whose brightness was almost out of harmony with the subdued tint that everywhere else prevailed. Aunt Margaret, stately and slightly formal, but gracious nevertheless, saw that every one was abundantly helped.

We may say in passing that Aunt Margaret, though she was solicitous for the spiritual welfare of the race, was never unmindful of the bodily wants of humanity. She delighted in a bountifully-spread table, and her frequent declaration was that "it did her good to see folks eat." As there was always a superabundance of the best where Deborah Williams provided, assisted as she was by her sister—for the latter had a born fondness for culinary exercise—it was sometimes difficult to escape a surfeit. Aunt Margaret seemed to have adopted the unhygienic and dangerous maxim that "it is better for stomachs to suffer than for good victuals to spoil;" and those who knew her best were aware that she made free application of it to others, though she was abstemious herself. Fortunately for the excellent lady's notions of "good-living," there was a lank youth of seventeen attached to the household as serving-boy, whom no amount of stuffing could surfeit, and on him she usually expended her exhortations to "help himself." Having been starved in his earlier days, before a kindlier fate had directed him to his present quarters, he was apparently endeavoring to make amends for past deficiencies, and the quantity of food he disposed of was amazing.

Philip Wayne as well as Frank Leighton had frequently sat at the table of the Williamses, and knew what to expect there in the way of gustatory enjoyment. Not that he was at all a sensualist in the matter of eating, but he appreciated a well-prepared and well-served meal, as we all do, or ought to. On the present occasion the savory shad, the "smear-case," the nut-sweet bread, the foamy biscuits, etc., were discussed and enjoyed, and laughing comparisons made by the young men between the fulness before them and Pat McNally's "potatias."

Supper over, after a pleasant evening in the cheery old sitting-room, the visitors took their leave.

Such was the home under whose roof Flossa Gordon found constant welcome. There she was to remain until she went from it as the bride of Philip Wayne.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT RAVENSWOOD AGAIN—MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

Mrs. Emily Montgomery had returned to Ravenswood shortly after her daughter, that stormy April night, had assisted in making ghostly experiments in regard to what the future had in store for herself and her young friends. Irene was very glad to have her mother back, for since that time she had been nervous and timid, starting painfully at the least alarm, and indeed quite changed from her former self. She made no mention of the matter to any one, and could not bear to hear the subject spoken of by her companions on that occasion. So it was dropped; and when Mrs. Montgomery came back, Irene appeared to forget it entirely.

Perhaps another matter troubled her more.

It was evening—nearly nine o'clock. Irene and her mother were alone in the family sitting-room. They had been conversing on a variety of topics, mostly relating to the experience of the latter in city circles during the past winter. Irene was usually greatly interested in these subjects, but now she seemed pre-occupied and indifferent, and Mrs. Montgomery was not so vivacious as often. At last the course of conversation changed. The name of Philip Wayne was mentioned. Irene unconsciously aroused herself, but a deeper shadow passed over her brow.

"By the way," said Mrs. Montgomery, as if speaking incidentally, "what sort of an enterprise has Philip been lately engaged in? Hildah was speaking of it this afternoon. The story is that he has lately returned from the mountains, or some far-away region at least, bringing with him a strangely beautiful girl, whom, it is said, was rescued from a band of outlaws who are supposed to have abducted her. A romantic tale, truly. Do you know anything about the affair, Irene?"

"Little," she answered briefly, "except what I have heard the servants say." Her manner was agitated, despite her attempts at composure, and her mother did not fail to notice it. She looked at her keenly, saying:

"Tell me what you do know, Irene. I am quite interested in the matter."

"You, mother?" exclaimed the daughter in surprise. "Why should you be?"

"I may have a particular reason," was the reply, with a touch of mystery in her tones. "Tell me all you have heard, my child."

"It is not necessary to repeat it; it is substantially what you have yourself related."

"Have you heard nothing more?"

The question was closely put. Irene hesitated, her agitation of manner increasing. She appeared as if about to speak further, but restrained herself, and with a proud, impatient gesture turned away. Her mother regarded her with new surprise.

"Since you will not speak, I will tell you what *I* have heard. It must be mere gossip though."

Irene turned full upon Mrs. Montgomery at this, her face flushing and paling alternately.

"What, mother?" she demanded quickly, but with a tremulous quaver in her voice, for she knew what was coming.

"That Philip Wayne is to marry this strange girl."

"Oh, mother!" cried Irene in a tone of woe and passionate despair.

Her secret was out now; that cry came from the depths of her soul and revealed the truth. Mrs. Montgomery was startled at her daughter's sudden display of feeling, and the discovery she had made.

"Irene, you love Philip Wayne. I never guessed it before."

A burst of tears came from the agitated girl—a fierce, gusty shower that lasted but briefly. Then, humiliated by her weakness, she drew herself proudly up, a dark, daring look showing in her face.

"My child! my child! I never dreamed of this. My thoughts in connection with this subject were running in quite a different channel. You kept your secret well."

"How could I do otherwise when Philip has spoken no word of love to me?"

"Since you love him then," said Mrs. Montgomery coolly, "you need not despair of becoming his wife. But if that consummation should not be reached you need not break your heart over him. There are others quite as eligible as he, and you will not remain unsought, Irene."

"Oh, mother, mother!" wailed the passionate girl "You do not understand me. I cannot live, with Philip Wayne the husband of another."

Mrs. Montgomery had not indeed comprehended the force and seriousness of the passion her daughter had conceived for young Wayne, but she was beginning to realize the truth. Nevertheless, she still took a very composed view of the affair.

"Has Philip ever put himself forward among your suitors, Irene? I have not observed it."

"No—no, as I have said," stammered she, while a burning blush rose to her cheeks.

"Had you any reason to suppose he would?"

The question was put in quite a business way, and Irene was rather shocked at the coolness of her mother, but she answered with defiant plainness.

"Yes."

"Well, then consider the absurdity of this report concerning Philip. He goes on a business journey to the hills, accidentally discovers this mountain-girl, falls in love with her, and is to marry her at once! Is that a probable story? Quite like the romances would have it, but nothing more. Is Philip Wayne, the son of a gentleman, a young man of wealth, culture and education, to wed an illiterate rustic—a backwoods girl at that; and is he to do this when he might obtain the hand and fortune of Irene Atherly?"

The speaker's tone expressed the most unbelieving contempt. Whether she was really so incredulous was a question. Irene listened gloomily to the words, though her dark eyes lighted with hatred of one whom she had never seen.

"It may seem a preposterous thing to you, mother, yet I have reason to believe that there is truth in the report."

"And Philip Wayne is to throw himself, away, heart, hand and all, upon this mysterious nobody, after the most approved and romantic fashion?" sneered Mrs. Montgomery. "Impossible!"

"It is *not* impossible," said her daughter, bitterly.

"You believe it then?"

"I am forced to."

"And you resign yourself to this extraordinary turn of events?"

"No!" she answered, fiercely.

"You are a true Atherly, Irene. They believe in having things their own way. I rejoice at your spirit. Since you so decidedly prefer Philip Wayne to any other man as your future husband—though he has been heretofore, and perhaps is yet, unconscious of your flattering discrimination—"

"Do not speak in that tone, mother," interrupted Irene, in a pained, impatient way.

"Pardon me, my child. I will be more careful of your sensibilities. As I was saying, since your affections are actually given to young Mr. Wayne, you should have the happiness of becoming his wife—though I would prefer for you a more brilliant position. There is Rufus Amberly—"

"Mother," said the really suffering girl, "*I love Philip Wayne.*"

Mrs. Montgomery, who all along, notwithstanding the character of the subject they were considering, had not repressed a spirit of levity, felt that she had indulged in that long enough.

That she was a heartless woman her words and manner had sufficiently proven, but she was not wholly inconsiderate of her daughter's feelings, and began to wonder if Irene would not take the matter to heart with all the ancient Atherly force. They were a fiery, passionate, unforgiving race, and a love-disappointment with them proverbially brought evil. She ignored that possibility for the present; the subject had another and a different phase of interest to her.

"My child," she said, "the appearance of this unknown forest girl in this neighborhood I fear more intimately concerns our mutual welfare than you are aware. Her reported betrothal to Philip Wayne—how preposterous that sounds—may be distressing to you if you are thereby to lose a heart you hoped to win, and which already possesses your own; at the same time, her coming arouses on my own part painful forebodings, the character of which you little guess. I am speaking very mysteriously, you may think, but I wish to prepare you to hear a strange story. There is nothing too romantic, too absurd, too improbable in this world to accord with fact. This wild new-comer is said to have been stolen from her home in infancy. Hilda has given me an account of the whole affair; exaggerated, of course, and colored to suit her sympathetic fancy, but certain circumstances in connection with the narrative cause me the profoundest uneasiness. If all I suspect is true, we have indeed a trouble precipitated upon us. Listen; I will explain concisely."

Irene was almost awe-struck by the changed and serious tone in which these words were uttered. A startled expectancy communicated itself to her.

Dropping her voice to a whisper, and bending to her daughter's ear, Mrs. Montgomery proceeded with her revelation. Irene listened in a sort of dazed but patient incredulity.

"What!" she almost screamed at the close.

"Hush! do not alarm the servants. You comprehend what I have said?"

"Oh, mother! it cannot be!"

"But I tell you it can."

"And you never breathed a word of this to me before! You have kept this secret from me all these years!" cried Irene reproachfully.

"I thought it best, my child."

"But I should have known this; we have been standing together on the brink of an abyss, and you never showed me my position—never whispered nor warned me of danger."

"I thought it best, Irene," repeated her mother calmly.

"But was I not to be trusted?"

"Yes; in time I should have told you. The event of this strange girl's appearance has only hastened the communication. I have kept the knowledge from you because I did not wish to burden and distress you with it, and because a secret is safest in the minds of the fewest possible number. But now I cannot longer delay."

"What if—what if the truth should be discovered?" faltered Irene. Then she said with a sort of savage joy: "But I do not care, mother, if it should be revealed. I would rather rejoice at it. If I am to lose Philip Wayne, I care not what else I lose. Ruin, confusion and disgrace would be welcome; aye, death itself!"

The vehemence of her emotion was alarming.

"Silence, Irene; do not speak so. None of these things shall overwhelm us. I am not one to sit passively by, awaiting the coming of disaster. I will ward off this impending peril. I will take the offensive before our opponents know that in me they have an enemy. And you, my daughter—do you yield at once and weakly to possibilities of pain and humiliation? Do you surrender your secret claim upon the affections of Philip Wayne?"

"No—no, I told you," she answered with returning fierceness.

"Well, then, let us take a calm view of the situation."

"You may think calmly, but I cannot now; I can only think of this mischief-working waif—this creature who consciously or unconsciously may bring us both to ruin, as she has already brought me to misery. The reptile! why should she crawl from her mountain-hole to obstruct our paths?"

"She didn't crawl, as I understand it," said Mrs. Montgomery with a sort of sneering humor. "Philip Wayne brought her down on a raft."

"Well, she is here. What do you purpose doing about the matter?"

"I intend to crush her," declared the mistress of Ravenswood with a hard, set, dangerous look.

"Between your hate and mine this innocent wilding will be in a dangerous position."

"She has ventured near the lair of the lioness; let her escape if she can. If she knows not her danger, let Heaven direct her from it, for I will not warn nor spare her. Have you seen this interloper yet, Irene?"

"No."

"Your friend Edith has taken her to her bosom, it seems. I believe those Quakers would give shelter to a leper."

"You cannot wonder that they have admitted her to their home. Frank Leighton

was with Philip when she was rescued from those who are supposed to have abducted her—outlaws, tramps, or whatever they be—and he naturally suggested that his betrothed would accept her, when her story was told."

"It is an admirable arrangement," sneered Mrs. Montgomery. "How the sympathies of our neighbors in drab must be aroused! I trust they will not attempt to investigate her case. Has Edith invited you over to form the acquaintance of their guest?"

"Yes; but I shall not notice the kindness," answered Irene with a sneer more bitter than her mother's. "I could not conceal my hatred of her. I could kill her—I *will* kill her if—"

Her eyes blazed with a sudden murderous look, and her aspect was that of a beautiful demon.

"Hush, Irene!" spoke her mother, alarmed at the fresh fierceness of the jealous girl's manner. "You do not mean what you say, but you terrify me."

"I terrify myself; but I would rather die—I would rather die on the gallows than to see another the wife of Philip Wayne."

"Silence, silence!" pleaded her mother; "you alarm me beyond measure."

"You need not be so perturbed," said Irene, with a change from fierceness to coldness of manner. "You declared that *you* would not hesitate to crush her."

"So I did; but I did not mean—" She paused, fearing to utter the dreadful word.

"You did not mean murder, you would say. Well, then you are better than I. *I* mean it in my heart, and I might as well say it," continued she, in an appalling whisper. "I am wicked, I know—more wicked than I knew till now. But I feel so hard, so hot, so hateful here." And she pressed her hand to her breast.

Mrs. Montgomery, dismayed by the wild, wicked words of her daughter, surveyed her a moment with a horrified look. Then, with a sigh, she said to herself:

"She is a true Atherly—proud, passionate, impulsive and, in her moods, dangerous; not like myself cool, calculating and persistent. But her hatred will not soon subside this time, and it may bring her trouble."

Then aloud she continued:

"Leave this whole matter to me, Irene. Say nothing, do nothing, think nothing, if the latter is possible, and all will yet be well. This girl shall be removed, and in losing her, Philip Wayne will lose his romantic conceit for her. Self-preservation, and a regard for our mutual happiness, will induce me to take effectual measures to secure my object."

Mother and daughter remained long together that evening, and when they retired it was not to lay their heads upon peaceful pillows, but to dream of further evil against the innocent cause of all their perturbation.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MEETING BY THE RIVER.

Several days elapsed from the date of the interview described in the preceding chapter. The remaining days of April were few.

Flossa Gordon rested undisturbed in the Quaker farm-house, dreaming of no near danger, but thinking sometimes of the dark face of Irvin Gaines, though without any decided apprehension of his finding the place of her happy concealment.

Starway had seen her once during this time, tarrying with her a few brief, bright hours, assuring her of his undiminished interest in her welfare, and then going his unknown way again.

After a succession of chilly, windy days followed by rain, a change in the weather occurred, and the young spring in all her soft glory came back to the land.

Flossa Gordon, alone—as she sometimes liked to be—walked down to the river. She watched for an hour the long processions of rafts go by—the sight kindling in her mind vivid recollections of scenes from which she had recently escaped. She wondered if any of her rough but valued friends were there, and—less pleasing thought—she reflected that enemies might also be passing.

So absorbed was she in gazing upon the bright flowing river, and the animated spectacle its surface presented, that she did not observe a light craft, some distance above her, shoot out from the shore of Ravenswood and cross to the landing near which she stood. The thickst of trees that fringed the river bank indeed partially prevented observation, and had they been in foliage would more effectually have done so, but a glimpse of the approaching boat might have been obtained nevertheless. It contained a single occupant—a graceful, vigorous, feminine figure, who propelled the light batteau with a skill that was not easily to be surpassed.

When the shore was gained, Flossa heard the clink and rattle of the light chain with which the boat was being fastened. She herself had apparently not been discovered, or if so, the newcomer did not design to land with secrecy. Flossa turned to leave the spot, but by this time the boat had been secured, and the fair oarsman was near her. The stranger beheld her, first with a start of surprise and admiration, and then with instantly changed and darkening looks.

It was Irene Atherly. She was startled for a moment at seeing unexpectedly the bright, shy face of Flossa, and the next she felt that the stranger-girl was none other than her hitherto unmet and unknown rival. She regarded her then with a dark, scornful, intimidating stare. Poor Flossa, unconscious of what relation she held toward this haughty-looking beauty, knew not what to think of this silent, disdainful greeting; greeting, we say, for though no word was yet spoken, the manner of Irene had conveyed volumes of unflattering expression to our gentle heroine.

"What is there in my appearance that she dislikes?" queried she of herself as her eyes fell before the annihilating stare of Miss Atherly, and as she turned to move away. "She is so proud, so regal-looking, she must despise a simple creature like me. But she need not hate me, I am sure; perhaps—"

"One moment, please," said Irene in sweet, deceitful tones.

Flossa was surprised anew; how could such a pleasing voice be made to accord with such unfriendly aspect? She paused and looked up in timid wonder.

"You are Miss Gordon—the—the young person who is staying with the Williamses, are you not?' The tones of the questioner were changed and cold—almost sneering.

Flossa gave a little involuntary nod. As she stood there, shy, wondering and confused, she looked very beautiful indeed. Her rival took it all in; the fair, white brow—that alone was calm; the modest, drooping eyes, wonder-filled; the delicate, downy cheeks, tinged with fluttering color; the small, faultlessly formed nose; the dainty mouth, expressing sweetness, with its thin lips like wet coral, indicating in their slight curve a latent pride and spirit; the small rounded chin; and above all, that wonderful profusion of floss-like hair, that seemed like tangible sunshine. It was worn loose, save that a braid from each temple was crossed and fastened over the head.

All the beauty, the *naïveté*, the woodland grace of Flossa Gordon, Irene Atherly comprehended, though she had expected to find in her a simple maiden, whose chief charm was that artless and winning rusticity not unfrequently to be observed in the untaught, but natively refined. But there was more—much more—than this in the young girl before her.

No wonder Philip Wayne, at first sight, had loved her; yet the thought was maddening.

Irene loved Philip with the whole strength of her selfish, fervid nature. Until the rumor of his engagement to another—a report that had shocked and startled her like the near bursting of a thunderbolt—she had believed that his affections would eventually be directed to her, though as yet he had not made the slightest advances as a suitor. In the arrogance of her self-esteem she had felt confident of this result. She knew that she was beautiful, and that Philip admired beauty; she was accomplished, well-born, and rich—why should he not seek her for his wife? He had indeed asked himself this question, and it was no unmaidenly exhibition of a preference for his society that had repelled him, for Irene had been most decorous in her conduct toward him. It was rather an instictive distrust that warned him against her. Obeying it, he had been very discreet in his intercourse with her, and not the most watchful could have concluded that he meditated more than friendship.

This, then, was all there was between them.

That Philip Wayne should prove so unsusceptible to her charms, but be so quickly touched by those of another—a simple, ignorant, untaught creature too—not only aroused the jealous hatred of Irene, but it deeply wounded her self-love and vanity. And now this fascinating nobody was before her.

Irene regarded her for several moments after she had addressed her, with the same merciless, scornful stare. Flossa was distressed by this silent and contemptuous survey, and again made a movement to withdraw.

"Do not leave me," said Irene, imperiously. "I would speak with you awhile. I have heard the romantic story of your recent adventures, and am interested. Perhaps you will gratify me by letting me hear it from your own lips."

A cool request to make after such an uncivil greeting!

"I do not know you," said Flossa; "you are a stranger, and—"

"You resent my inquisitiveness," interrupted Miss Atherly, hotly. "You need not, for I meant it for your good. But it is well, perhaps, that you refuse to give me your autobiography, for I fear I would not have patience to listen to you. I would do you a service, however, and that is why I addressed you when I concluded you were the individual who is at present creating so much talk in the neighborhood. It is even said that you are the affianced of Philip Wayne. Can that be so?"

Flossa at this abrupt and unwarranted query would have fled from her strange interlocutor, but a sort of magnetism restrained her.

"Let me warn you," proceeded Irene, "that only evil can result from this—only sorrow and suffering to yourself. Believe me that the end will be dismay and bitterness. Who are you? Can you hope to wed with Philip Wayne, the son of proud and wealthy parents, not unmindful of social considerations—you a nameless waif from the hills? They will never receive you as their daughter. You are bringing trouble upon others, disaster upon yourself. You are young and guileless or you would see this; knowing nothing of the world, you are unconsciously rushing to your destruction. Even if Philip Wayne is not deceiving you, he will soon come to detestation of you—he will be forced to. His imagined love for you will soon fade, and then will come the reaction so dangerous to yourself. Girl, girl, while there is yet time save yourself from this calamity. You should know that you are not a fit mate for him, who, dazzled for the hour by your rustic charms, will soon turn from you to those of name and station."

These wild, distracting words were heard by our fair heroine as some poor prisoner might listen to his doom, pronounced by beautiful but cruel lips.

An agony of terror, doubt and apprehension swept over her. Might not all this be true? Would not her princely lover shortly tire of her and wish that she were gone? She herself had questioned the compatibility of a union with Philip Wayne—she seemed so simple, so ignorant, so weak, and he so far above her! She forgot all his assurances of love, and for the moment was sick with fear.

Irene saw the effect her words had produced, and she gloried in the pain she had caused. A bitter, derisive smile was on her lips.

"Oh, who are you to tell me this?" wailed her victim at last.

"Seek not to know—one who would save you from impending misery."

"And what—what must I do?" faltered Flossa, in sad perplexity.

"Do? kill yourself; drown yourself; fly; anything but remain here," was the answer, in almost maniacal tones.

Flossa glanced in new surprise and alarm toward her companion. Surely it was no friendly warning that had been given her. Hate, jealousy and scorn were expressed in the excited features of Irene. A conviction that the person before her was actuated by selfish and evil motives entered the mind of Flossa.

"Perhaps *you* are deceiving me," she said, at length, and in her despair, for there was hope in the thought.

The eyes of Irene blazed with a fiercer light.

"And if I am," she hissed, "if I have warned you falsely, and if Philip Wayne will remain true to his vows, let me tell you, girl, that there is danger near you still. I am not deceiving you now. A peril of which you do not dream threatens you. There is no safety for you save in your utter disappearance from this region. Enemies have found you out, and if you value your life you must fly. Do you believe me now?"

"Why should you so terrify me without cause."

"True; why should I? I do not, and if you are wise you will act upon my warning."

"And I must leave my friends or perish?"

"Yes; friends, lover, all," said Irene, with a rising sneer.

"And whither can *I* go!"

A bitter, pitiless laugh was the response.

"I am homeless and alone. I know not where to turn. Oh, I cannot, cannot leave those who have been so kind to me. I will remain and die, rather than attempt to save myself by abandoning them. You have spoken of enemies; I have them, I know—*you* may be one; you look so cruel, so pitiless, so wild. Why should I be so hunted and hated? What have I done but witnessed wicked deeds? Who am I but a child of misfortune?"

"Yet you love life—we all do—and once more I warn you that you are doomed if you do not seek safety in obscurity."

"Can you not understand my helplessness?" asked Flossa, piteously. "Your wild words have filled my mind with terror, yet I will not—cannot—flee. Philip will protect me. Oh, he can not prove false as you have said he would. I will tell him all, and trust him still."

"Speak to him or to any one of this interview at your peril," cried Irene fiercely and threateningly. "As you have divined, *I am* one of your enemies. I will tell you why; I will utter words that torture should not have wrung from me. You have stepped between me and the love of Philip Wayne, and for that I hate you. Dare to breathe this to any one, to *him*, to Edith Williams or to others, and you shall feel my vengeance."

The truth that Flossa in her confusion and guilelessness had been slow to comprehend was plain to her now—she was the successful rival of this haughty and passionate creature.

The threat with which Irene closed was accompanied with an expression of such malignant hatred that Flossa, alarmed for her personal safety, gave one wild glance at her excited foe, and then turned and fled from her like a frightened fawn.

Irene's flashing eyes followed her until she disappeared from view. Then the exhausted girl threw herself at the foot of a tree, and—wept!

After a time she calmed herself, and then returned to the island. As she went along she muttered thus to herself—

"What a fool—what a wild, wicked fool I have been! What injudicious threats I used, what vain warnings I uttered! It is like me—my unbridled temper carried me away. She will tell all and then I will be ruined. No, no, she will not dare to. The creature! how beautiful she is! Oh, I hate her, I hate her, though I should have been wise enough to conceal the feeling. What will be the end of all this? Only misery, I fear, but *she* shall not become the wife of Philip Wayne. And then that other cause of hatred, even if the first did not exist! But I will not think of it now. I am weary, wretched and distracted."

Reaching the house, she hastened, unobserved, to her chamber and locked herself in.

Flossa, flying the presence of one who had so unhesitatingly declared herself an enemy, thus wildly exclaimed to herself as she went along:

"How wretched, how terrified, how perplexed I am! Only evil seems to attend me. Oh, Philip, will it be as she says? Will you soon tire of your poor Flossa, and sigh to be free again? Will family and friends refuse to receive me? If I bring only discord and trouble to others, and am so hated and persecuted myself, it were better to be dead. What shall I do? whither shall I turn? But I am putting Philip's truth against the threatenings and aspersions of an enemy. Oh, I must trust him, I *do* trust him—but I will say nothing of this painful scene. That dark-souled lady would kill me, I am sure. I must be silent; Philip's love will be sufficient to protect me. But it grieves me, it grieves me sadly to be the cause, even the innocent cause of pain to others. With these good friends I thought I had found peace, but now a new peril threatens me."

She grew calmer as she approached the house, and endeavored to exhibit no traces of her recent terror and excitement. Aunt Margaret was the first to meet her, and, despite the efforts of the inwardly agitated girl to appear composed, saw at once that something disturbed her.

"Why, what ails thee, child?" was the anxious inquiry made by the good lady.

Flossa attempted to smile, but the result was not assuring to her kind questioner.

"No one has endeavored to harm thee? Those wicked men have not found thee out?" asked Aunt Margaret in sudden apprehension.

"Oh, no," answered Flossa. "I am only tired and nervous. I took a walk by the river, Aunt Margaret, and—and"

"And what, my dear?"

"I met a person who was unkind to me."

"A rude fisherman, no doubt," said Aunt Margaret, making her own conclusion, and very much to Flossa's relief. "A rude fisherman—they are abusive sometimes. I would advise thee, my child, not to walk by the river alone any more. It is unsafe."

Edith now joined them, and supper being announced, the three went to prepare for it.

CHAPTER XVI.

STOLEN AWAY.

Days went by—a couple of weeks in fact had elapsed since the meeting by the river—and Flossa still rested undisturbed with her Quaker friends. Whatever might be the machinations of her enemies, nothing new had occurred to alarm her. She had spoken to no one—not even to her lover—about her painful interview with the heiress of Ravenswood, but had quietly resolved to let matters take their course. When Philip next saw her after that trying event, he was so happy in announcing that their wedding-day should soon be fixed, that she could not bear to detract from his delight by uttering a single word of what was on her mind.

"He loves me indeed," she thought. "He is so true, so strong, so faithful, that I need have no fear." And in this conclusion she rested, quieted, if not wholly satisfied; for the thought of possible evil could not be entirely banished, and she secretly trembled as the warnings of the haughty Irene were remembered. It was no doubt of Philip's constancy that troubled her however; but a vague feeling of uneasiness that had its origin in the conviction that her rival was capable of working her bodily harm.

It was a pleasant afternoon near the middle of May. Aunt Margaret was on the front piazza alone, sewing, when she descried a man coming down the lane. He was evidently a peddler, for he carried a pack. Entering the front gate, he made his way directly toward her, saying:

"Want any tablecloths to-day, ma'am?"

Now a tablecloth peddler was Aunt Margaret's especial dislike, for she knew that travelling dealers of that order were usually rude and rascally.

"Tablecloths? no; we are well supplied with the article."

"But you had better examine my stock, ma'am. Splendid assortment, I assure you; nothing like them in the country stores."

The peddler had set down his pack, and was displaying his goods to the uninterested eyes of the lady.

"Thee need not trouble thyself to disarrange thy parcels. We purchase such goods of regular dealers only."

She did not like the fellow's appearance, and wished to get rid of him as quickly as possible.

"Humph!" said the man; "but you might look at 'em."

"It is not worth while," she answered.

"Fine damasks, figured linens, plain homemade, in fact every style," persisted the dealer.

"We are abundantly supplied already."

"Maybe I could sell you a dozen napkins. I carry them too. Now, look here; did you ever see anything better than that on any counter?"

He held up a specimen of his napkin-material before her, at the same time glancing quickly and furtively about as if he hoped to make some observations without being suspected of entertaining any evil design.

Aunt Margaret still refused to become a purchaser.

"Well now," said the peddler in an injured tone, "you are rather discouraging on me. How's a fellow to make a living, if nobody buys? But maybe I could sell you some handkerchiefs; I have a small stock of them. Any young ladies about? They're my best customers. Ah! here they come now."

Edith and Flossa, hearing voices outside, had come from the sitting-room to the piazza.

"I say, young ladies, can't I sell you each a handkerchief or so? Trade's dull with the old lady," he said, none too respectfully, "and I *would* like to dispose of a shilling's worth."

As he spoke he bent his keen eyes on the two girls, and a look of sinister satisfaction appeared in his face.

"Thee has no need of this man's goods, has thee, Edith?" asked Aunt Margaret, in a tone that plainly indicated that she preferred her niece to extend him no patronage.

"Oh, no," answered Edith, "but we might look at them."

"That's right, young ladies, don't be afraid to examine 'em. No charge for that—and while you're looking, I'll take a glass of water."

He stepped to the fountain as he spoke, and caught a glass of the sparkling liquid. Aunt Margaret took advantage of this opportunity to whisper to Edith—

"Don't purchase a single article, my dear. I am afraid of these vagabond dealers, but I will not even to get rid of them, give them money in exchange for their goods. I do not think it right to patronize them."

"Well, will you take anything?" asked the man as he returned from the fountain.

"Nothing at all," said Edith positively.

"Then I might as well be off," returned he with an offended air. "Rich Quaker folks with plenty of money, yet too close to part with any of it. Humph!

"Any charge for the water?" he added impudently as he gathered up his wares.

"None at all," rejoined the elder lady quietly. "If thee would confine thyself to so cheap and pure a drink, perhaps it would be better for thee."

Muttering something in reply to this, he moved away and was soon out of sight.

"A rogue—a villain, as nearly all of his class are," remarked Aunt Margaret with much greater severity than was natural to her. "A very different character from our known variety peddlers. I feel quite relieved that he is gone."

"I did not like his looks at all," said Edith. "And he regarded Flossa very strangely."

"His parting glances were not very flattering to any of us," said Flossa. "I really think he is dangerous—he had such an evil eye."

"He will not trouble us," spoke Aunt Margaret confidently. "He caught a glimpse of Tray in the kitchen door, and will not return for fear of a demonstration on the part of the dog. I wonder the old mastiff kept so quiet. He has an abhorrance of tablecloth peddlers, and knows them by sight."

"Poor fellow!" cried Edith. "He is getting old. Here Tray!" He came at her call, and soon in petting and fondling the faithful creature, the circumstance of the peddler's visit was nearly forgotten.

Two hours later, as the shades of evening were deepening into night, Edith Williams stood at the rear garden-gate, looking for her lover. Frank had informed her that he would probably be late that evening, but that he would come.

Another half-hour passed, and as she had not yet entered the house, an inquiry was made for her.

"Flossa," said Aunt Margaret, "has thee seen Edith lately?"

"She was at the rear gate some time ago," was the answer. "I will call her."

"Do so, please; it is imprudent for her to remain out so long."

Flossa's conclusion had been that Edith and Frank were together in the garden, but as the evening was becoming quite chilly, she doubted if that could be. She ran to the rear of the house, however, and called softly:

"Edith! Edith!"

But no Edith answered. Flossa entered the garden, still calling her friend. She was not there—only silence and deepening gloom.

"She—must be in the house," said Flossa as she rejoined Aunt Margaret.

"She is not in her chamber. Can anything have happened her?"

A sudden fear communicated itself to both, for they simultaneously thought of the evil-eyed caller of the afternoon.

Search for the missing one was now commenced in earnest. The household was aroused, and men and maids sought for their young mistress. Aunt Margaret expressed her fear that the insolent peddler had returned and offered her violence; yet it seemed improbable too—such revenge for the slight cause of offence that had been given. The spot where Edith was last seen standing was visited. By the light of a lamp that was brought out, marks of a struggle were discovered. Also a book that she had been reading, lying on the ground and bearing a heavy foot-print. The evidences of foul doings were indisputable.

Instantly all was confusion and alarm in and about the peaceful mansion. Messengers were despatched to inform the neighbors of the facts and to ask for their assistance in finding the lost one.

In the midst of all this excitement Frank Leighton arrived.

"What has happened?" he questioned, anxiously; and trembling voices gave him the alarming answer.

"Gone!" he exclaimed incredulously. "Carried off, you say? Impossible! Who should attempt evil against Edith?"

But he was forced to accept the terrifying conclusion, and with all the eagerness and anxiety of a true lover he at once set out in search of his betrothed.

"Find her, Franklin, find her," wailed Aunt Margaret, who appeared to feel that she had been the cause of the trouble by her severe treatment of the presumed abductor of Edith.

Robert and Deborah Williams, not to be frightened out of their calm and balanced bearing by any event, however alarming, were intensely anxious concerning their daughter, but took an encouraging view of the affair.

"No one will harm Edith," said her father confidently, "but the poor child will be greatly distressed, it may be, before we find her. Deborah, does thee remember when John Markham's daughter was lost? May our darling suffer no more than she, for Lydia declared she quite enjoyed her adventure."

He said this to keep down his wife's graver apprehensions, and then hastened from her.

It was soon known for miles around that the daughter of Friend Williams had been stolen from her home, and the news of course in that quiet region created the most intense excitement. The general and immediate conclusion was that the outrage was not the malicious act of a petty peddler, but that the bold river-robber, whose deeds were still fresh in the minds of all, was concerned in the villainous work.

Local search that night revealed nothing of the whereabouts of Edith. The matter grew more and more serious. When the exhausted neighbors began to return to the farm-house with no tidings of the lost girl, the distress of the family was most painful.

Searching parties, prepared for a longer stay and more thorough examination, were organized and sent out. Those were not the days of the telegraph and railway, when messages could be instantaneously transmitted to distant points, and remote districts could be quickly reached in person; but the methods of overtaking criminals and evil-doers were slower.

Morning came—noon of the next day—and yet Edith had not been found.

That patient gloom which follows painful excitement and unsuccessful effort settled over the household, but abroad the search for the abducted girl was not relaxed.

Yet nothing came of it. It seemed as if the earth had opened, and then closed upon her, so utterly had Edith Williams disappeared from the knowledge of all.

Frank Leighton returned home, weary, worn and distracted. His grief was silent, but it was terrible. As still waters are the deepest, so the silent soul is the greatest sufferer in affliction. Leighton had not abandoned the hope of restoring his betrothed to her family and to himself; he came back to learn if anything had been gained from other sources, and to obtain the co-operation of his friend, Philip Wayne, in the further prosecution of the search. Not while life lasted could he yield his darling Edith.

"How strange, how mysterious is this whole matter," said Philip to him as they arranged their plans of actions. "If Flossa had been taken, I would not have been so mystified; I would have concluded that her old enemies had found her out—poor Flossa! may they never do so!"

"May they never indeed!" responded Frank fervently. "May you never suffer what I have suffered, Philip, since this unhappy occurrence. And Edith's parents—you must see them for me; I cannot go to the old homestead again until I take the lost one with me."

"I understand you, Frank; I will do as you wish. It is desolation there now—or at least I know it would be to you. I will go over this evening, and to-morrow our party will start. Cheer up, Frank, and rest to-night if possible. You will need all your strength in this next, and, I trust, successful search. Edith *must* be found; *will* be; and in the meantime comfort yourself with the belief that no harm will come to her."

"There, there, Philip; you are a true comforter, and I thank you; but you need not attempt to lessen my anxieties. Hasten, and return, and let us start early. Everything is ready."

And Philip, heavy hearted, notwithstanding his words of cheer to his friend, went his way.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WERTZAL THE SCOUT;

OR,

The Phantom of the Black Hills.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!

"Don't know—smart-appearing fellow; but whether he has the courage for the times is more than one can safely bet on. He's got a responsible route, however, the mail being heavy and valuable, and three months ago there were twelve passengers and drivers, all told, killed in a very short space of time. Last trip he told me he expected his brother occasionally to ride on the box with him; and then he said the robbers had better mind their p's and q's. His brother is the celebrated Col. O. Fitz-John, of the detective force of Washington and New York cities. Here's out here on the scent of some government swindlers."

"Sean Fitz-John?"

"Yes, sir, yes; rode through here three weeks ago on his way to New Paxley. Got an eye in his head, I tell you."

"Oh, has he?" quoth a loafer. "Only one, eh?"

"Two," replied the imperturbable host; "two, keen as bayonets, with one of those close-shaven, colorless faces that convey the fact that nothing ardent has ever unhinged his nerves. A face so finely cut as to show any unusual twitch of the smallest muscle."

"The brother ought by right, then, to have the requisite skill to drive a mail stage."

"In course; but fruits of the same tree do not always have a like flavor."

"Yer right, Mr. Boniface," said a newcomer, getting in in time to hear the closing remark.

"Wertzal, by Jupiter!" "Wertzal, as true as I'm a sinner!" were the different exclamations of the group in the bar-room of the frontier inn; and "Old boy, what are you strayed so far into civilization for?"

"Ter sir my morals, yer know. Ef I was to lose entire sight of the white border ov so-ciety, I might ul-ter-mate-ly larn the ate-er-quet ov the pitch-wig, which would disturb the bones of my four-fathers; leastwise, I trotted a bit out of ther way inter this settlement with a bit er biz for Colonel O. Fitz-John, an' in case I don't see him I ken send word by the line. Thar's a fellar jest started on a long journey from the fort yonder, an' he left a confession behind him. Three days ago, when he was tryin' to get forrard to Aryzony, he gut in an argiment with sum striped bugs that brought on a disturbance with his har; an' the end on't is he's done a raythor mean thing at last—he's bust on his confeds, in the hopes ov thus buyin' parding on some wuthless old notes of his'n yonder; and my opinion is it'll be—the confession—sot down ter his ultimate accaount as consumedly nasty. Ef O. Fitz-John ken reach a sarting pint ov the cumpasses in a givin length ov time, he ken do up some bone-sores—leastwise, felons."

"Come outside, Wertz, and see what you think of this red color against the sky."

The old scout obeyed with alacrity.

"It's fire."

"I am afraid so. I have been watching it for some time. Can you make out if it is stationary?"

A moment's silent investigation caused Wertzal to say:

"That ar vermillion is sartainly spreadin'."

"Settlements?" was the significant query.

"Spread too much fast," spoke Dicky, who had remained outside when Wertzal entered the inn. "Big war party beat small party. Small party much scare—fire grass—burnee up trail."

"The wind, however, is gettin' up a rumpus—the grass is dry, and how far away is it?"

"Not many hours' run—bad, bad."

Every one ejaculated the half-breed's remark.

"An' as near as I ken reckon, the wind is histin' it t'ward Shultsville at a rapid pace."

"You are right," observed another, "and there is sure to be some persons crossing the prairies when they are on fire."

Not another remark was offered for the space of fifteen minutes. All the people belonging to the inn were anxiously watching the conflagration.

"Wertzal," said an old trapper, speaking to the scout as the one having the most experience, "that fire is coming *here*."

"I'm jest making up my mind to the unwholesome truth," was the return. "I've sighted its course; the wind is streamin' in from the exact pint of the compasses to top-dress the flats with the ashes of Stockbridge."

"What shall we do? what shall we do?" cried one and another, getting word of the terrifying facts.

"Jest one chance," said the scout, "if yer mighty smart. Stockbridgers, ye ken do it—fight fire with fire. Hey! hey! hey!" he suddenly yelled, growing excited as he watched the broadening, rushing flames. "Turn out, every man, woman and child with blankets, coats an' wet swabs ov all demensions. Three or four of us will ride to ther windward ov here an' fire up a little on our own responsibility. Yer to flap fast and unceasingly along the edges—don't let it jump in beyond yo—keep the youngsters in line—hold her breaks when the big smoke billers belly outward. By all the saints in the cullender! the fire demon is afoul of Shultsville. See how high the flames run up—they're unfurlin' thar banners from the house-tops. Here, you, Joe Hamilton, call, order out of k-oss of yer ken, and see that they shat ther jackets contermaciously. Don't let a red tung get in by yer."

"The mail-stage is due from that direction," observed a new-comer.

"Fitz-John's?"

"Yes."

"God 'v massy! I tole yer thar's allas somebody bound to be out in the way ov these torch-light percessions. Here, I say, Rubber Dick, ride ont er piece with me—I kant stan' it. Don't yer hear them awful squeals and bellers? Bufferlers an' every cussid thing that ken run allus gets afore it an' tries speed. Hey, Dick—wher in the devil is Dicky? Git up! git up! Come outside a piece an' help set the fire. Thar ain't the fraction of a minnit to spair. D-i o-k-y, eh!"

With a "Yah-ugh!" the half-breed brought his Indian pony up at a run, and he and the scout dashed off a half mile to the windward of Stockbridge, and taking positions wide apart, hurled their torches into the grass. For a moment they flickered and smoked sulkily, and then catching the dry grass, shot up a thousand fiery spires.

"You travile," said Wertzal, waving his hand to the rushing flames. "Let's get out here a mile 'r so, Dick, as far as 'twill do ter venter, jest so's we ken git back ter this burnt ground ahead of the flames. Jupiter! see the billers of that red-hot sea toss an' roll."

By the time they had galloped a mile they could hear the frantic and oft-times dying bellows of the suffering herds of the plain; and the roar of the distant rushing flames was appalling.

"'Twon't do ter venture further, Dicky—hah!"

Both had caught the different and distinct sound.

"You hear that? clicket, clicket, close up ah-yah!"

"What's—by the Lord! stage-hosses."

"Stage-hosses broke clear."

"Swing out—git hold of them if yer ken—ah! that's bad."

The terror-mad horses, their heels bothered and thumped by the bounding whiffle-trees shied clear of both Wertzal and Dicky.

"We'd ort to hev catched 'em, and cut em loose, so as to kerried a couple on 'em along to mount some 'ev the passengers. Thar's no knowing how meany on 'em is in the overturned veheek—several, no doubt—leastwise, thar's allars a squad 'ev people when thar's anything particular cussed goin' on."

While the scout was talking, without a thought of danger to themselves, he and Rubber Dick had ridden at a strong gallop toward the rapidly approaching conflagration.

The smoke began to come now in blinding puffs, the crackle of the fire was appalling, and farther out the frantic bellowing of the fleeing buffalo filled up the terrible programme.

But a woman's voice crying "Oh, help, help, mercy!" and finishing in a long, wild wail, drew the heroes forward. The red of the dreadfully illuminated sky tinted the earth with the wavering glow peculiar to the Aurora, and close by the overturned carriage were two figures crouched on the sod. The one that was crying held an infant in her arms, the other, supporting her half-unconscious form, was praying in a low but audible tone.

"God-a-massy! quick Dicky—yer hoss is ther stoutest—take up the baby an' its mother, while I take the other. Whar's the driver?"

"God alone knows," was the hurried reply, "he and the man—an outside passenger—(when the horses became uncontrollable and broke away, turning suddenly upsetting the stage,) first sought to overtake the animals, and finding they couldn't, returned and catching up two of the women passengers bore them off to the westward where they knew of a stream of water. They promised to come back for us, but doubtless they are lost."

"Poor fellows, we may share their fate—we shall, unless we can git the greatest rate of speed that ever horseflesh knew. Dicky, ye'll hev to be cruel, in order ter be kind. Use yer knife—use yer knife fur a spur. Hi! yar! yar! yar!"

But Dicky's *thoroughbred*, headed from the roaring flames which she, with quivering nostrils, had faced so long against her will, now stretched herself unmindful of her double burden, and took the way before the roaring conflagration at a stride perfectly amazing, while the guttural Indian "yup—yup—yup!" of the half-breed, acted upon Wertzal's animal better than whip or spur.

"Hold yer grip, gall," spoke the scout, "don't yer bounce off. I've got ter head, if I can, to a strip of burnt land, but the pesky critter's got her bits agin her tombstones—an' hold hard, hold hard!"

A huge on-rolling billow of smoke, fearfully white and strong smelling, broke over them, shutting out the drifting mane and flowing tail of the foremost horse.

"Hi, hi, hi! git, git u-u-p! u-u-p! God a massy? u-u-up! u-u-u-p!"

Broken and burning grasses were shooting over and dropping on to them like fiery arrows. It seemed that time had shortened from minutes to moments that would decide their fate. The white billows broke continuously over them, shutting out all view of the surrounding country. Still the intrepid scout uttered that long, hoarse cry to his panting steed; still faintly amid the roar of the flames and wind sounded the wild yell of Rubber Dick.

CHAPTER XXV.

SAVE IN.

Without the least idea now of where he was going, so blinded and strangled was he with the pungent smoke, yet with the instinctive hope of saving his life and the life of the woman with him, Wertzal urged on his frantic horse.

"Keep your mouth shut," he said to the woman; "breathe through your nose."

The billows of smoke now were edged with flame that lapped hungrily, close up to the fugitives.

They had heard a wild shout just ahead, another and another; when a broad, scarlet blaze with an angry wh-i-s-s-h-h! shot far above them, broke short off, and descended with the speed of a thunderbolt.

"Don't breathe—don't breathe," gasped the scout, and the horse on the instant giving a shoot ahead like a comet, escaped the edge of the flame by a hair's breadth, and the next instant stumbled upon her knees amid the wild huzzahing of the settlers at Stockbridge. The infuriated conflagration had followed him just as far in over the newly-burned stubble as its strength permitted, and was then extinguished by a billow of inky smoke.

Wertzal and the half-stifled woman were picked up from where the stumbling steed had thrown them, and he and Dicky congratulated each other upon the providential idea of burning in front of the town while they could take care of it.

The scout and Dicky characteristically gave the women up to the kind hands of the settlers' wives, while they themselves rubbed down and cared for their smoking and worn-out steeds.

Before midnight, after the smoking plain abreast of the town and to the southward had somewhat cooled, the driver and his three passengers came in, in sorry plight from their mud and water bath in the stream to which they had fled for salvation, and from which the two men found it impossible to return for the other sufferers. Nothing but one lifting, falling, roaring waste of fiery billows stretched right and left not fifty rods distant. Only by ducking their heads under the shallow flood could they live, for the fire reached to the bank. As it was, broad tongues of flame shot across and across the ravine, until they were fearful of being roasted where they lay.

But when the kind-hearted driver found the two women safe in advance of them, he was affected to tears, and, better yet, didn't excuse the fact on the plea of smoke, but let a crowd of people see him mopping his eyes. Wertzal had rescued the wife of Lieutenant Strother.

She had started to meet him at Fort L——, as he had sent word for her; but the outgoing stage striving to cross the prairie before the conflagration should come up with them, was whirled from its course by the

unmanageable horses, and only the intrepid daring of the scout and Dicky had prevented a fearful tragedy.

Catherine had but few words to say to her deliverer; but those were heartfelt and sufficient, and her prayer of thanksgiving in her own room was given to God from the depths of her soul.

But she had said to the old hero when his vision and voice were freed from the stinging smart of the smoke—

"Has my husband, Lieutenant Strother, seen you within a day or two?"

"No ma'am, not's I knows on fur months."

"Then you do not know that for nearly a week he has been searching for your whereabouts? Emily Armstrong has been stolen and carried off again out of our very house."

"The d—l!" ejaculated Wertzal. He probably referred to the fellow who had kidnapped her; otherwise, we can make no sense of the expression, and the scout meant something by every word which he uttered, even to the bad ones, which he used simply because no other words would or could express his meaning, although many persons might find exceptions to this statement of ours.

Therefore, when he exclaimed, "the d—l!" he was in earnest, and his one eye shot beams of fire from its depth.

"When, how, an' whar was she taken?" he questioned, as soon, apparently, as his astonishment would allow.

Catherine related what we already know.

"It's the half-breed—I'll bate my hat—an Injun would 'ev bin a leetle more cautious. In some respects, I'll be burnt if the mongril ain't wus than the pitch-wig; they air as unscrupulous, an' a darned sight bolder by daylight."

Then he asked a dozen rapid questions.

"Now," he went on, "here's me an' Rubber Dick as 'el giv' chase—ef he ken get that ar squaw 'ev his'n sumwhar as she won't git boosted afore he returns—in case she did, by all the saints in the cullender, we'd hev to hev a petticoat fur a trade-mark, an' make squaw-huntin' our perfession. You'll get on to L—— to-morrow, leastwise, ye'll see Strother an' ye tell him that we're—Dicky an' me, turned our muzzles toward the Black Hills with the fust crack 'ev day. 'Bout all these infernal plug-ugs hev thar holes among the accommodatin' gaps of them foot-stools of the Rockys; leastwise we'll meander over the worls of nature there-about, an' see what we ken see. I've bin fur sum months a ponderin' upon an expedish to that very strip ov uneven surface."

"If you can only find her, and bring her back to us, we will love you all our lives," was Kate's warm-hearted remark, as the old hero arose to leave the house where he had been invited to tarry.

"That's big pay, ma'am, big pay, fur I know ye mean it, an' if I find her I shall bring her away, or stay with her—you understand."

Catherine nodded, still holding his hard, strong hand.

"I cannot express my feelings in regard to your brave unselfishness in perilling your own life to save mine. Oh, Wertzal, what a soul there is in this rough old body," and she wrung his hand in her nervous fingers.

"Ye'd make b'lieve I'm suthin' like the chestnut, would ye, gal? God bless ye! I ain't nothin'—hev bed a rough-an'-tumble game with the world; but I've known suthin' of ye afore, Kate Burke, although I'd no idee who 'twas down on the ground yonder callin' on the Lord; an' I'd do considerable for any poor sufferin' creeter; but I remember what ye did once when ye thought the settlement was to be butchered; an' thar ain't no danger I wouldn't face fur a woman hero."

Wasn't the old fellow gallant?

When Strother learned of the prairie being on fire to the northward of the fort, he was in an agony of terror at the probabilities that might follow upon the conflagration. That the stage in which his wife was likely to be a passenger would be making its regular trip, and would be destroyed by the fierce element, was too painful a view to allow a moment's habitation in his breast; yet it returned again and again with dreadful force, and as soon as the burned ground had cooled sufficiently to allow him, he mounted his horse and dashed forward. He found Shultsville and two other small settlements consumed, and the suffering inhabitants homeless. Farther on, at Stockbridge, he was made acquainted with Kate's marvellous escape, and also with the fact that she had been successful in seeing Wertzal, where he had failed.

"But, Strother," said his wife, "I do not feel as if I could go to Arizona until I learn something of Emily."

"But, my dear, I must positively be there to report myself at Tucson by the 20th Colonel Darley will await my coming, and if I fail my opening may be lost."

"I know all that, but I thought you could go on, you know, without me, and I will return to Barketon for a few months. There is something so dreadful in the fate that follows poor Emily, that it would seem heartless for me to leave her alone, if she is ever restored to us,"

"This is a matter upon which you must judge for yourself, Kate; of course, it will be a great disappointment to me to go forward without you, but, perhaps, I had better. After I get business straightened out, I can, possibly, obtain a vacation by placing a reliable sub. in charge, and events then may be agreeable for you to return with me."

So they arranged matters, and Catherine returned to her brother's, hoping ere long to obtain news of the poor girl who seemed to be a battledore of tricky fortune.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PHANTOM.

After the one wild cry for help had burst from Emily's lips, the scarf was knotted more tightly, and the rough clutch upon her shoulder, together with a torrent of partly understandable threats, convinced her that more outcry would be dangerous.

Away, away under the mild but dark spring sky, and the horse, after two or more hours of unbroken speed, began to falter; then his dusky driver dismounted close by what was now a narrow, brawling stream, but which, later in the year, would be a dry hollow along the plain.

The time, the place and her situation were so similar to those on a former occasion, that it was difficult for Emily to realize that the events which had transpired since that time, were anything but the vagaries of a dream.

While the horse cropped the fresh grass and she sat hopeless upon the earth, a melancholy wail came surging along through the night. The poor girl shuddered, believing it to be wolves, and the guttural exclamations of her captor, with the horrified intonations of his voice, confirmed her fears. Quite an interval of time elapsed before they heard it again, but the third cry came nearer. The half-breed waited no longer, but whistling up his reluctant steed, he again flung the weary girl in front of him and made what speed he could toward the northwest.

But it came in terrible regularity now, and the renegade urged his poor beast ahead with all his power. As it approached nearer, it was as if the voices of the bottomless pit had united in one diabolical yell.

Emily knew now what made the foreboding cry. She had heard of the terrible phantom, whom no one of all those who had heard it could name or describe, and caught glimpses of its spectral form. Her fear, if possible, was augmented tenfold. Not very suspicious, yet she, in common with others, did not relish unexplainable sights and sounds.

Nearer, coming nearer. The half-breed drew frantically upon his bits and turned in another direction. Straight down upon them from that quarter it seemed coming. Again the swarthy renegade whirled his beast about and started to the eastward, in the very direction from which he had just now so hotly ridden. The twisting, rising and falling cry was facing them there. In seeming despair the baffled miscreant threw down the bridle and allowed the animal to obey his own will. The liberated steed fled due west, leaping wildly at every fresh outbursting. Emily, breathlessly and unconsciously, gripped hold of the arms of her captor. There was a thunderous trampling of hoofs, a rush and an unearthly squeal, and the half-breed's steed vainly gave a gigantic sidewise bound. Then came a terrible collision of opposing forces; the poor beast was thrown heavily down, in its fall pinning the swarthy rider to the earth, and tossing Emily more than a dozen yards ahead of it. She was stunned by the fall, and dimly sensed crying out for mercy, and afterwards descrying what seemed the wing of a huge vampyre swooping above her. Then the force of the fall rendered her wholly unconscious.

To what horror did she awake? To what witch incantation did she owe her terrible surroundings? She tried to rock herself to awaken her senses, but felt so utterly sore and miserable that she forbore, and let her staring eyeballs look their utmost.

A rocky cavern, grim with the smoke as it seemed of centuries, surrounded her vision on all sides. Here and there, amid its sootiness, the firelight struck upon the squared corner of some stalagmite or stalactite, and from thence a ray of fiery light traversed the surrounding space. A fire of some sort of cones burned steadily upon a stone hearth, the smoke lifting itself stealthily upward, and finding an outlet, either natural or artificial, in the vaulted roof.

But crouched before this fire—Emily softly rubbed her eyes to ascertain if she were indeed awake—was what? A human being? Hardly. It must surely be a satyr, or ghoul from Hades or the middle region of souls. The monstrous feet were folded under the crooked legs, and on either side presented the nearly square bottoms. The distorted knees were the connecting hinges between spindles below and overgrown limbs above. The arms were disproportionately long—but the face—what pencil could outline it? or what pen describe? Above the bulging toad eyes the skin of the forehead was wrinkled back as long as furrow could be piled on furrow, and the strong, pointed fangs of teeth glistening white in the fire-light, fully exposed by the curled back lips. All these facial horrors were surmounted by what might readily be mistaken for a tattered brush-broom, so snarled and matted was the towy hair. His huge head fitted upon his shoulders, like a ball with a very small peg at the base, sitting into a very large socket, so loosely did it bounce around without any intervening neck.

Emily closed her eyes, feeling that to gaze one moment more would be to insure madness.

That she was in the habitation and presence of the Phantom of the Black Hills was evident to her mind.

Hearing some slight movement her fascinated eyes again opened. The wretched dwarf was walking about the cavern, (if the waddling motion could be called a walk,) and she watched him with feverish pulses. He first spilled some more cones upon the fire from a leathern sack, and then reaching up his long arms he cut a huge chunk from a leg of venison, and poising it upon the point of his villainously dirty knife, he thrust it into the embers.

Emily watched him in moveless silence, as after only heating the meat, he tore it in shreds with his strong fangs and devoured it with the rapacity of a wolf, finishing the operation to her infinite disgust by lapping the knife. After stretching up, gaping, and swallowing like a choked fowl, he turned his eyes toward her with a look that made her flesh creep. During this whole time he had kept up a sort of dog growl to himself.

The anguish experienced from the wrenching of her muscles in being thrown so heavily from the horse, caused her to groan and endeavor to turn herself. The frightful creature again arose and slashing off another piece of the meat, he turned it about two or three times in the embers, and then advanced and extended it toward her. She threw up her hands for the double purpose of refusing the food and for waving him off. He poised the unaccepted meat above his his head, ran out his tongue after it two or three times, and finally dropped it into his huge mouth. As he turned his back to walk away, his buffalo skin leggings and frock, together with his unwieldy movements, made him appear like a humorous grizzly, performing in his own private residence.

It is impossible to imagine what Emily might have been tempted to do had she possessed any sort of weapon, for to bring her mind to consider the creature before her a human being she could not; and so she lay helpless, in a frame of mind closely bordering on insanity. She felt that she should never dare to sleep again, lest the vampyre should take her life while she was unconscious.

After a time, as her mind became more accustomed to her surroundings, it appeared to her that she must be at an altitude far above the level of the plain, and she thought that she could make out the echoes of a stormy wind crying among the fissures of the cave. When she again opened her eyes the dwarf had vanished. In some dark corner, doubtless, sleeping, and she dared not to stir lest she should arouse him.

And now she could make out the gurgling of a stream somewhere in the rear of the cavern, proving beyond a doubt that a violent storm was raging. Hours passed, but whether of day or night she could not tell, for the place had no light now, the cone fire having settled to a bed of white cinders.

With a painful effort she managed to turn upon her side, on her nowise sweet-scented couch of skins; and while in this position, without previous warning, she beheld the long claw-like fingers of the phantom digging open the sulky coals, and puffing his breath among them until they glowed with life, when he jostled other resinous faggots upon them, and in a few moments weird shadows were leaping upon the smoke grimmed walls.

The second time she refused his horrible offering of meat—but reasoning with herself that it was necessary to retain her strength, when, hours after, he tore off a slice of the buffalo, she signalled him to hold it longer on the embers. He seemed to understand, and turned it about in the glowing fire until it was in danger of becoming a cinder itself. And although her stomach and palate revolted when the creature extended it to her, and ejaculated with a sort of gurgling sound "Eat!" she managed to swallow a few mouthfuls of the questionable fare and felt her courage revive.

He afterward brought, in a leather dipper, some water from the rear of the cave, and she drank with feverish thirst. Her nerves grew calmer. The creature evidently, at present, meant her no harm—so hope whispered that all was not yet lost; and before a long time even sleep visited her—a broken, incubus sleep, traversed through and through with diabolical phantasms.

After a while the human mind can familiarize itself with almost any horror; and so as days passed, and the hideous dwarf made no hostile demonstrations, Emily ventured to walk about the cavern. He made no forbidding motion, only watched her with his glassy eyes, and growled ominously if she ventured too far into the shadows.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A PERILOUS RIDE.

BY C. SOAMES.

I was going home "for good," in school-girl phrase. It had always been a promise made by my father that, on attaining the mature age of seventeen, I should leave school, and become the mistress of his house. And although the date fixed had always appeared to me dreadfully distant, the intervening time had at last worn itself away, and the delightful prospect of returning home had become a "sober certainty of waking bliss."

I cannot say that I was sorry to leave Burgminster, where I had been at school for seven long years. Not that Miss Winter was worse, I think, than other schoolmistresses; but still, school is school; and the present style of luxurious girls' schools had not then been invented. Young ladies of the present day, who are placed at some expensive school where they are accustomed to hot meat dishes or fish on the breakfast-table, with all sorts of bread and muffins, and their choice between tea, coffee and chocolate, would have turned up their pretty noses at the plain tea and bread-and-butter of Miss Winter's breakfast-table. *En revanche*, we were better taught, I think, and instead of the modern educational system of attending concerts and shallow lectures from pretentious "professors," we had solid work to do. If we did not exactly realize Wordsworth's ideal world of "plain living and high thinking," we had, at all events, plain living and hard work.

But all this was now to cease—or almost all. My dear father declared that he could no longer do without me for a companion! and while he was at chambers—for he was a hard-working barrister—I was to go on by easy stages with the more ornamental parts of my education, under the guidance of some reliable teachers; especially with water-color painting, in which art my father greatly desired me to become a proficient. A charming prospect I thought it; and the vision of the dear old house in Old Burlington street, with my father waiting to welcome me, filled my eyes with tears as I stood on the platform of the Burgminster station, waiting for the train which was to convey me to all these delights.

Miss Winter never would allow any of her girls to start upon a railway journey without herself placing them in the carriage which she thought most free from moral and physical dangers; and she took care now to place me in an empty compartment about the middle of the train, with a strict injunction to the guard to allow no one else—she did not choose to say "no gentleman"—to enter it. As this behest was always enforced by the addition of a half-crown, the good woman felt no misgiving as to its being attended to, having entire faith in the potency of metallic attractions. But in this assumption she failed to remember that there were other half-crowns beside her own, and that the acceptance by the guard of her own douceur in no way prevented that functionary from availing himself of a similar attention from some subsequent donor.

I was glad enough to see the old town quickly become a dissolving view as we sped rapidly toward the city; and as I threw myself back in the carriage of Miss Winter's choice, I began to conjure up the dream-land of happiness which lay outstretched before me. Seventeen years old, with health and a sufficiency of money; a father who loved me dearly, and who was the most charming and intelligent of companions, and around whose cosey round dinner-table constantly assembled men eminent in literature and art: what a delightful prospect it seemed, after good Miss Winter and Fräulein Braun—that materialistic and beer-loving daughter of the Fatherland—supplemented by the average prosaic, silly school-girls amongst whom I had lived so long! *They* would have called my dear father's associates "fogies," and would have infinitely preferred the haw-haw, or perhaps hee-haw, of the gilded youth who were his great abomination, and whom he had taught me to appreciate more justly.

I was still buried in my dream when the train stopped at the Carford station; and whilst my own particular guard was admitting a party of ladies into another carriage, the Carford station-master opened the door of my compartment, and a middle-aged, gentlemanly-looking man got into the carriage, bearing a small black travelling-bag in his hand.

It had always been my habit from childhood to speculate upon the nature of the strangers, travelling companions, and others with whom I chanced to be thrown into contact; and I was soon deeply immersed in my favorite custom. My fellow-traveller appeared to be rather a handsome man, of perhaps forty, with a magnificent black beard, and a grave, dark, thoughtful eye of peculiar expression. Soon after seating himself he took a tiny volume from the breast-pocket of his coat, and was soon absorbed in its contents. What was he? Not a clergyman in mufti, I thought; he lacked the cheerful, holiday-making-and-enjoying kind of look which generally characterizes the priesthood in travelling. A barrister would hardly be so far from his work at mid-day during term-time; and yet he seemed to belong rather to one of the professions courteously called "learned," than to squiredom or trade. At last I determined that he must be a physician travelling homeward from some case at which he had had to stop for the night; and the little manual in his hand I placed amongst those pocket pharmacopœias which doctors sometimes carry, and consult upon the sly during intervals of labor.

Having settled this knotty point, I relapsed again into my castle-building, when my revery was interrupted by a hasty movement on the part of my companion, who laid aside his book with an uneasy gesture.

"I *beg* your pardon," he addressed me, "but did not you notice that singular swaying of the carriage? I have observed it for some time, but felt reluctant to name it."

No; I had certainly noticed nothing of the kind, but being always prone to railway terrors, I began to forecast all kind of horrors.

"Oh, *yes*," he continued, with a grave smile; "*there*, you surely must have felt *that?*"

Still I was obliged to confess my inability to detect the supposed oscillation of the carriage, although my companion protested that it was most evident, and showed great excitement about it.

"I am sure," he said, "that the train is overloaded; *that* is the cause of the movement, and we must do all we can to lighten it;" and before I could interpose, he had thrown his hand-bag and overcoat out of the window of the carriage.

A horrid dread now crept over me; for I felt sure that he must be insane, and I remembered, with a sickening feeling at my heart, which for a moment entirely stopped my pulse, that the train, which happened to be a fast one, would not stop before we got to London, which was nearly an hour distant. When I remembered this, I thought I must have dropped from my seat with faintness at the dreadful ordeal before me. However, I recollected having heard that mad people might be somewhat controlled by the demeanor of those they were with, and I made up my mind to sell my life as dearly as possible.

"Ah," he pursued, "that does not relieve the strain sufficiently. I am *afraid*," glancing furtively at my face, "that we shall be obliged to sacrifice ourselves for the safety of the other passengers. It is, as you know, a very large train, and very full. What a noble piece of heroism it would be to save the lives of so many hopeless people, who are not, like us, acquainted with their danger! would it not?" he added, shifting his seat for one near to me, and keeping his large dark eyes steadily fixed upon mine.

With the utmost difficulty I resisted the temptation to scream as he seated himself next to me.

"*I* shall certainly do so," he pursued, "but I fear that *you* may not have sufficient fortitude to do it of yourself."

And as he said the words, I saw, by the nervous twitching of his hands and arms, that he was itching to give me the necessary impetus out of the window to insure the sacrifice. With a hurried prayer to Heaven for aid, I firmly grasped the elbows of the seat, and set my feet as firmly as I could against the opposite side of the carriage. I was just on the point of sobbing out a prayer for mercy to my companion, when it flashed across my mind to try the effect of some ruse to obtain time, knowing that if I could but delay the "sacrifice" I might be saved.

"Would it not be better," I whispered, for I was past speaking aloud, "to pray for the safety of our companions, instead of trusting to our own efforts to save them?" and without waiting for his reply, I poured forth Heaven knows what incoherent but heartfelt prayers for the safety of *all* those who were in the train.

My words seemed to act like a charm upon my fearful companion, and taking his basilisk eyes from mine, he gradually slid down upon his knees and became to all appearance rapt in prayer. Most happily for me I had been taught from childhood to make my own prayers—to express my very own wants and desires instead of using any forms (except one) devised by others—and this habit enabled me now to keep on with a volubility which surprised myself, although, as the chance of escape increased, I could scarcely repress the sobs which rose to my throat.

In seasons of such horror minutes seem to be as long as hours, but it appeared to me that my time of probation *must* be nearly over. I managed, however, to keep on a little longer, until at last—oh, joy of joys!—I saw from the fast-increasing houses that we were nearing London, and my prayer was turned into a heartfelt thanksgiving for my preservation. One glimpse of my dear father's face at the station, where he had come to meet me, and then all was blank until I found myself lying on the sofa in Old Burlington street, with my father and good Dr. A—— regarding me with troubled looks.

As soon as I was sufficiently recovered from the strain of my dreadful journey, I heard the sequel of the history. My companion turned out to have been a certain Sir H— M—, who had that morning made his escape from a lunatic asylum near Burgminster, and whose flight had occasioned the greatest alarm, as his peculiar crotchet about railway trains was well-known, and had already led to at least one fatal result. The doctor, whose charge he was, had, however, succeeded at once in getting a clue to his movements, and had used the telegraph for his recapture; so that on stepping out of the train at the terminus he had walked straight into the arms of an efficient attendant, and had been safely conveyed back to his asylum. Although my escape is now many years since, I never even now enter a railway carriage without some trepidation, and I always take *especial* care never to ride in one alone with one other person of either sex, to guard against a recurrence of my perilous ride.

THE DOUBLE FLIRTATION.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY DAISY BURNS.

"Now, Ernest, you needn't say 'nonsense;' that man wants taking down, and I'm the one to do it. He boasts of having flirted with so many girls—here's one he shan't flirt with; but I'll send him so high, he'll wish he'd never seen a woman. I know I can do it; he doesn't know of our engagement; besides, he has all but told me he loved me."

"I have given you fair warning, Annie mine, you can't make anything off of Dr. Phillips, so you'd better take my advice and let him alone; however, use your own pleasure; I give my free consent for you to flirt with h'm for six months to come; be sure to have him sailing round the moon though, by that time, for then, and ever afterward, remember, you are to have but one string to your bow."

Annie Leigh had walked to the gate with her lover, Ernest Wilmont, and there, with eyes gazing upon each other, the above words had been spoken.

"There, Annie, comes the veritable doctor," said Ernest, looking down the road, where a buggy, being driven rapidly, came toward them.

"Good-bye, and don't hurt the doctor too hard," and, with a knowing smile, he left her.

"Good-evening, Miss Annie, good-evening," said the gentleman in the buggy, stopping before her. "Wouldn't you like a drive this evening? It's pleasant, and will bring you roses for your cheeks; but I needn't give that as an inducement, for you're looking as bright as the dawn."

"Yes, I'll be glad to have a ride," said Annie; "wait, and I'll get my hat." While she ran into the house, the doctor looked after her and mused.

"Fine girl, fine girl, but too much given to flirting. I'll just teach her a lesson—it will do her good. Ah, here you are back before I turned my buggy. Give me your hand. My, what a feather! Why, Rose would make two of you."

"Rose?" said Annie, brushing down her dress and looking up inquiringly.

"Oh, ah me—dear—ahem—oh, yes, I've a Cousin Rose, an invalid, whom I drive out sometimes when at home. Now, Beauty," giving his horse the whip, "off with you and give Miss Annie a quick-step."

Annie began conversation very briskly. "Vain old scamp," she thought, "I'll show him how to break hearts." And the doctor seemed to be sinking more and more into the meshes of love. He quoted Byron, made love, vowed she was the most beautiful creature on earth, &c.

"A fine commencement," thought Annie as the doctor assisted her from the buggy on their return, and she promised to drive with him next day to a picnic. "I don't think Ernest will say 'nonsense' now, men never *can* see anything. The man's half crazy about me, and Ernest only laughs and can't see it."

"Little minx," thought the doctor as he drove on to town, "she returns every soft look I give her, and loves me to distraction; well, well, the women will love a good-looking fellow like me in spite of himself."

Days went on. Dr. Phillips and Annie went to picnics together; waltzed together at the hops; took boat rows on the river by moonlight; drove out together—everything in fact that a flirtation requires—until behold! Annie's six months had expired, and the day before her wedding she began to wonder and ask herself, "How am I to tell him? I have not really promised to marry him, yet I know he expects it. Oh, dear!" And at this critical moment Ernest steps upon the scene again.

"Where is your doctor, Annie?" he asked.

"Oh, he's gone to Belleville to see his mother—has been gone since Tuesday. Oh, Ernest—we'll be married when he comes back—unless he returns to-night. Won't it be a blow to him."

"Yes, a terrible stroke—have you seen this morning's paper?"

"No; is there any news?"

"Something rather new here," drawing a paper from his pocket, and pointing to a paragraph, "read this." She took it and read: "Married, at the residence of the bride's father, Dr. J. W. Phillips to Miss Rose Campbell, both of Belleville."

"Good gracious, why Ernest!"

"Yes, I've just returned. I was the doctor's attendant, ha! ha! ha! he asked me to step over and console that little blue-eyed sweetheart of his, Annie Leigh. So I've come to do it; where's your camphor bottle?" Oh, here it is."

"Oh, it's too bad; don't, Ernest, let me alone," as he tried to hold the camphor bottle to her nostril. "I think you might have told me. You knew it all the time."

"To be sure I did; they've been engaged a full year, but don't grieve little one. She's rich; no doubt he loves you best now."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"Didn't I tell you to let him alone; but I guess you've learned a lesson. Maybe you'll let folks remain on earth now, and not thirst to 'send 'em up' again. Say, Annie, he'll be sure to think you marry me just for spite."

"Oh, don't, Ernest, let us talk of something else."

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LITTLE HODGE. By the author of "Ginx's Baby." Published by Dodd & Mead, New York: and also for sale by Smith, English & Co., 710 Arch St., Philada.

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THE DRAWING-ROOM STAGE: A Series of Original Dramas, Comedies, Farces, and Entertainments for Amateur Theatricals and School Exhibitions. By GEORGE M. BAKER, author of "Amateur Dramas," etc. Illustrated. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

SOCIAL CHARADES, AND PARLOR OPERAS. By M. T. CALDOR. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE, for February. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila. An excellent number.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, for February. Published by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston. Good, as usual.

THE GALAXY, for February. Published by Sheldon & Co., New York. Always interesting.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE for January. Published by the Franklin Institute at their hall, Philada.

EXERCISES at the Laying of the Corner-Stone of the New Building for the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. December 7, 1872.

MADAME DE CHAMBLAY. A novel. By ALEXANDER DUMAS. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada.

TREASON AT HOME. A novel. By Mrs. GREENOUGH. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada. Price $1.75.

ANNUAL REPORT of the Chief Signal-Officer to the Secretary of War for the year 1872. Government Printing Office, Washington.

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF THE MEDICAL SCIENCES for January. Edited by ISAAC HAYS, M. D. Published quarterly by Henry C. Lea, Philada.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE for December. American edition. Published by the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York; and also for sale by W. B. Zieber, Philadelphia. The paper upon Johann Wolfgang Goethe in this number is one of the ablest criticisms we have ever read.

FRANK FAIRLEGH. By F. E. SMEDLEY. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Phila. Price 75 cents.

SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY, for February. Published by Scribner & Co., New York. Read Dr. Holland's story.

☞ An old gentleman, on picking up his morning paper recently, saw a large head line of "William Penn in Philadelphia," and without reading what followed, he dressed himself in his Sunday spectacles and best cane, and said he guessed he would go right down and see William. Before reaching the depot, however, he met a friend who, on learning the object of his visit, explained matters, and the old gentleman returned home a wiser, but a disappointed man.

☞ A young lady writes to an exchange giving a receipt for having fun. She says, invite half a dozen boys and girls to your house when your pa and ma are away; put a half-dollar silver piece in a dish with molasses an inch deep in it, and offer it to the boy who gets it with his mouth. The more the boys who try to get it, the more fun will there be. That girl deserves a diploma.

☞ The oldest man in the world has at length been discovered. His name is Jose Martino Conticho, a resident of Cape Frio, in the province of Rio Janeiro, Brazil, who was born on the 20th of May, 1694, and is therefore nearly one hundred and seventy-nine years old! It is said that he has forty-two children by six wives, and can count one hundred and twenty-three grandchildren, eighty-six great-grandchildren, twenty-three great-great-grandchildren, and twenty children of the last.

☞ The chill blasts of December were sweeping down the street, freezing as they went. And yet it took him an hour and twenty-one minutes by the clock to say "adieu, dearest," after he got on the door-step. It was all very nice for Alfonse, muffled up in a great coat and with the pulse-warmers she made him on his wrists. But it was decidedly rough on Clarice, who hadn't even a shawl on and nothing on her head but her top hair. Proceedings of this kind are open to sundry objections. Among other things they breed coolness and bad colds. Love that might outlive a fever, oft succumbs to a bad cold in the head.

☞ A black bear recently attempted to hug a Wisconsin maiden to death, but she jabbed him in the eye with an umbrella, and he fled.

MRS. SARAH HOWE, of Greenpoint, L. I., has had a Grover & Baker Sewing Machine in almost constant use for sixteen years, during all of which time it has been in perfect working order, and never required the outlay of one cent for repairs.

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PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

BEAUTIFUL NEW PREMIUM CHROMO.

The proprietors of this "Queen of the Monthlies" call the attention of the ladies to their Magazine, as being just what a Lady's Magazine should be. Edited by a Lady, nothing but what is of the most refined and elevating character ever is admitted to its pages. Its Engravings, its Fashions, its stories all bear evidence of the same refined and cultivated taste, which has endeared it to thousands of readers.

It will continue to publish Serials, Short Stories, Poetry, &c., from its old list of talented contributors. Among the Serials we may announce:—

THE MASTER OF GREYLANDS.
By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Lady Adelaide's Trial," etc.

UNA AND HER PRINCE.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "Una and Her Lions," etc.

A GIRL'S ROMANCE.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Queen Coquette," etc.

A NOVELET.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.
By Miss FANNIE HODGSON, author of "Kathleen's Love Story," "Raeburn," etc. [Miss Hodgson's Novelet will run through the whole year.]

FASHIONS, FANCY WORK, ETC.

Fine Engravings of the Fashions will represent the latest styles in Dresses, Cloaks, Bonnets, Hats, Headdresses, Fancy Work, Embroidery, &c.

BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS.

The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character, embracing pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections. These choice and elegant Engravings are a special feature of this Magazine, and should entitle it to the preference over all others.

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A piece of the latest and most popular Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth double the price of the Magazine.

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Those desiring to get up Lists of subscribers to the Lady's Friend, will be well compensated. The list of Premiums is the same as for the Post.

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A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, and which has all the rich and glowing colors of a fine oil painting—will be sent to the getter-up of every club, and, *under special rates*, to every subscriber. This Chromo is copyrighted, and the regular price of it is Five Dollars. It cannot be obtained for less than that price, except in connection with "The Lady's Friend," or "The Saturday Evening Post." It is twelve by fifteen inches in size.

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One copy of The Lady's Friend, and one copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	$2.50
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Four copies of the Lady's Friend and four Chromos (and one Chromo gratis),	8.00
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Additional subscribers may be added to the above clubs at	2.00

☞ These clubs can be made up of THE LADY'S FRIEND and "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST" conjointly, if 50 cents is added for each number of THE POST taken.

TERMS—Without the Chromo—Always in Advance.

Without the Chromo, we will send the Magazine at the old rates. One copy for $2.00. Four copies for $6.00. Eight copies (and one gratis to the sender of the Club) for $12.00. All additional at $1.50. Copies of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST can be taken in these Clubs at $2.00 apiece, which is now THE POST'S lowest Club price. The Chromo of "Little Samuel" will be sent to the sender of each Club, as a special reward for his or her trouble; and to each club-subscriber for one dollar extra.

One copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) and one of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($2.00) for $4.50.

OUR STEEL ENGRAVINGS.—Any one entitled a Chromo, may take in its place, if he so desires, a copy of either of our handsome Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

☞ Those desirous of getting up a Club, or a Premium List, shall have a copy of the Magazine sent to them gratis. They would also find it advisable to remit one dollar, for which we will send a copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel" in addition. They must state expressly, however, that they wish the Chromo for this purpose, or else it will not be furnished. If the Chromo gets seriously injured in canvassing for subscribers another will be sent to replace it.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twelve cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, payable to *our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded in *all cases*, to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo.

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
319 *Walnut Street, Philadelphia.*

Single numbers of THE LADY'S FRIEND, 20 cents.

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, FEB. 1, 1873.

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RATES:

Single copy, $3.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every single ($3.00) subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, "LITTLE SAMUEL," or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon." (Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or Engraving.)

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) and One of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) for $4.50. Or, if the Premium Chromo or an Engraving is desired in addition, $5.10.

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST (with the CHROMO, or one of our STEEL ENGRAVINGS,) and a copy of "PEMBERTON; OR, OUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO" (postage paid), for $4.50.

One copy of PEMBERTON (postage paid) $1.75.

TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO GET UP CLUBS.

If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

TERMS OF CLUBS. For $3.00 we will send four copies of THE POST for one year to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending the Club shall be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, or to either of our beautiful Premium Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

For $16 we will send eight copies to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending this Club shall be entitled to a copy *free*, and to a copy also of the Premium Chromo, or to either of our Premium engravings.

The senders of Clubs can afterwards add single copies at $2.00 each.

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The above Clubs may be composed partly of THE POST and partly of THE LADY'S FRIEND, if desired. The subscriptions to THE LADY'S FRIEND can be taken at $1.50 apiece, instead of $2.00. Thus four copies of THE POST, and four of THE LADY'S FRIEND will be sent for $14, and in the same proportion all through.

Special offers to those who wish to make up premium lists, will be found under that head.

CLUBS OR LISTS WITH CHROMO. Those desirous of getting up clubs with the Chromo, or Premium Lists, should remit one dollar, for which we will send them a copy of the Chromo. When the Club or List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another will be sent to replace it.

☞ No deviation allowed from our regular terms. If less money is sent, the paper will be sent for a proportionate period.

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☞ When additions are made to clubs, the new subscriptions must begin and end at the same time as the original club.

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☞ Ten cents should be forwarded, *in all cases*, where subscribers are entitled to and wish the Chromo or an engraving, to pay the expense of mailing.

☞ BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are enjoined to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

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No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.
SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

OUR CHROMO AND ENGRAVINGS.

The stock of Chromos with which we began the season being exhausted, there will be a delay of a few weeks in furnishing those who are entitled to them.

The artists are now engaged in the preparation of a fresh supply, and as soon as the pictures are completed, they will be duly forwarded by mail.

Of the beautiful steel engraving, "The Sisters," we have still a fair supply. And also of "Washington at Mount Vernon," and "The Song of Home at Sea."

Our stock of "One of Life's Happy Hours" is exhausted, and we fear the plate is too much worn to take new impressions from it; such, at least, as would give satisfaction. We would advise those therefore who think of ordering copies of this last engraving, to substitute some other in its place.

Any one entitled to the Chromo, and not wishing to wait for it, can, of course, order one of our steel engravings in its place, if desirous of so doing. But we may add, for the consolation of those who conclude to wait for the Chromo, that we are promised even finer pictures in this second lot than those already received.

THE CHILDREN'S GIFT.

BY FRED. E. WEATHERLY.

Homeward ran the happy children,
Laughing through the shadows gray—
Homeward from the flowery forest,
Where they played the live-long day.
Flowers were in their rosy fingers,
Rosy faces shone in glee,
Flowers that many a home would gladden—
Fisher-homes beside the sea.

Came the children to the churchyard:
Sank their songs to silence there,
For they stood where slept the playmate
Who was with them yesteryear.
Then they twined their flowers together,
Gazed and kissed them o'er and o'er,
Laid them on the little headstone,
Saying, "*We* can gather more."

WHY I DON'T WRITE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—I wish you *could* step in and see how many sheets of paper I have scribbled over, trying to get up something worth publishing in your valuable paper. Oh! I thought it would be *so* nice to write for THE POST. But, alas! I find when I sit down to talk to so great a personage as your honorable self, I do not know what to say. It's too bad! I shall have to "throw up my commission"—as the soldiers say. Here I have been trying for two weeks to get time to finish one short article. I take up my pen; some one comes in to see if I "think there could be a coat cut for Johnny out of this old one," and "if I will be so kind as to do it," &c.

Another runs in to see if it is true! She has heard that Jane Burk is going to be married to that Mr. Murphy. How on earth should I know? Another intrudes because she has the "blues; just came to talk." Now they are gone, I will write. What was I going to write? *Oh, my!* Here's a cut finger. Now, Mr. Post, will you be so kind as to tell me how Zig and Olive King, and all those renowned writers, learned to write so well and became so popular? *I never shall, I know.*

Wait till I tie up this boy's finger, and then I will try it again and see if I *can* write.

AUNT MATTIE.

☞ An exquisitely-dressed young gentleman, after buying another seal to dangle about his person, said to the jeweller that he would—ah, like to have—ah, something engraved on it—ah—to denote what he was! "Certainly, certainly," said the tradesman; "I'll put a cipher on it."

UNTO DEATH.

Ah! it is thou, the angel of my life,
The one faint voice from heaven
That filled my ear amid my hours of strife,
When hope, and joy, and light were all but riven
From me. My more than friend,
My love through all the years love has made dear!
Wait with me till the end!

Thou'st waked me from sweet dreams; and yet 'tis well,
For thou than sweetest dream
Art better far. And I would ever dwell
Within the glory of the tender gleam
Of those bright eyes, which lend
Heaven's light to earth; and yet it cannot be!
Wait with me till the end!

And thou, my love, hast come to me from far;
From that deep, sheltered vale,
Where first I met thee, my own gelding star,
And where, in twilight hour, love's early tale
Was spoken first. Oh, bend
Thy fair young face above me yet again!
Wait with me till the end!

For I would have the lips of love's first dream
Breathe kindly on me now,
And give their blessing, falling like a gleam
Of heaven upon a death-o'ershadowed brow;
A blessing that shall lend
A glory that shall light me through the gloom!
Wait with me till the end!

Thy presence lent a beauty to the flower,
A sweetness to the dove,
A charm to all the sounds of twilight's hour;
And I had all thy heart's impassioned love!
But now my soul must rend
Itself from thee, and go its lonely way!
Wait with me till the end!

I left thee on that day now long gone by,
And whilst I searched for fame,
My soul fed on the love in thy dark eye,
And burned that I might gain a noble name,
And that we yet might blend
Our lives in one renown; but all is o'er!
Wait with me till the end!

Thou knewest not how oft throughout the night
Thy presence hovered near,
And lent a lustre to my lonely light,
As through the silent hours I seemed to hear
Thy voice a prayer send
To heaven for me. Now, more than guardian one,
Wait with me till the end!

Dear love! I feel thy kiss upon my brow!
Weep not, my love and life!
I'll bless thee till we meet; be near me now,
While I am passing through this mortal strife!
No other hand can lend
Me like thine own amid this hour of need!
Wait with me till the end!

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

TOO MUCH OF IT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

There are a number of things in this weary world which are overdone. The post-office business is overdone, for one thing. The work of saving this country by the politicians is overdone, likewise. The country is saved most too much. Far too much, indeed. But the worst overdone thing in America, this day, is the lecturing business. It is like Artemus Ward's Mormons,

"How many is there of she?" asks the Saint who went to court a dead Saint's widow.

"There is jist seventeen of her," replies the mourning mother-in-law of the widows who had each possessed in her own right the seventeenth fraction of a man. But it would take more than seventeen of the lectures of these days to make one good lecture full of real, hard sense and information.

Suppose a man blows the top of his mother-in-law's head off, as doubtless numbers of men would like to do. That mother-in-law-killer straightway has a call to take the platform and tell other men how it was done. Suppose some drunken idiot, along with his "whisky straight," imbibes the crazy notion that it will be the proper thing to murder somebody who has befriended the drunkard's much-abused wife. Then, while the crazy liquor and the crazy notion are yet lingering in the crazy brain, he goes and murders the good and useful citizen in cold blood. Is the wretch hung up by the neck? No; he goes to lecturing. He is forgiven and wept over. Moral: If you wish to be petted and real popular, murder your wife, or the man who has defended your wife from your brutal fury. And go to lecturing—do! It's the fashion. It's the fashion for everybody to lecture. If a man is turned out of a post-office, he must go to lecturing over it. If a young man is sent by his employer to a place which is somewhat to one side of the regular line of railroads and telegraphs, and has the pluck and the luck to go there and back safe, from that time forth, and forever after, this young man regards himself as invested with a divine right to inflict himself upon a long-suffering public at ten dollars a head. And the whole batch of lecturers, murderers and all, don't say a single thing that you couldn't stay at home and read out of an ordinary book, in your own comfortable home, without the bother of going off and sitting upright with your company face on, till your back aches.

There was a time when lectures were admirable. Books were scarce, and every household in the land didn't take a half dozen newspapers, and send its sons and daughters to college. In those days, a few eminent persons, distinguished in science, literature, or oratory, or else eloquent and powerful in discussing great social questions, lectured, and people heard them gladly, eagerly. But all that is of the past. We hardly need lectures at all now, and the eminent and distinguished people scarcely open their mouths any more. They say what they have to say through books and newspapers. They have left the field to the abominable crop of imitators who have sprung up like weeds in an agricultural editor's garden.

What's the good of it?

In these days when we have more valuable reading than we have time for, when every man, yea, and woman too, can stand up before folks and speak a piece, why should every murderer, every escaped criminal, and every botch and bungler in the land insult the community by setting himself up for a public teacher? Especially when half of 'em can't even use good grammar. We are just about tired of it. Indeed, it's awfully wicked, but in view of the horrible infliction of lectures which will be dead sure to come upon us in case they get away,—in view of all that, one is almost tempted to wish that those murderers now shut up in the New York Tombs may suffer to the full extent of the law. They'll be sure to lecture, if we don't hang 'em. It's dreadful to think about.

Worst of all, the women are at it too. There's the rub. I've no particular objection to a man's making himself ridiculous, if he wants to do so. Indeed, I'm not sure but I behold the spectacle with a sort of malicious satisfaction. But when it comes to a woman's doing and being the same, when a woman has to up and make a mortal nuisance of herself,—that's something very different. When a murdering demirep steps out of prison and has the brass to aspire to be a teacher and instructor of folks, it does seem to me that the lecturing trade has come to its last mournful and ignoble end,—is dead, buried and pounded into the ground. And again: No matter how overwhelming, superlative and tremendous a woman's private domestic griefs and wrongs may be, it is infinitely better taste to bury them in the depths of her own breast till doomsday, than to parade them before a jeering public, and try to make a sensation and gain money out of them. How *can* a woman make a public lecture out of her squabbles with her husband? (At the same time not denying that it is eminently proper and necessary occasionally to make the same a topic for a private lecture to one person's ear.)

There are lady-lecturers who have something to say. One of the grandest, happiest hours of my life was an hour during which I heard a lady speak some years ago, a fair, slender girl, before whose burning words old men wept like children, and young men went out nerved to a brave and holy work. That fair, slender girl seemed inspired, like a prophet of old.

But there are not many such women as that. Every woman can't lecture any more than every man can go to Congress. And I wish my gentle sisters wouldn't try it so much, and have the newspapers call their efforts shallow and silly. It hurts my pride to see the newspapers poking fun at women. There is nothing easier than for a woman who is a failure in this life in other directions, to get herself recommended by an ex-governor and go off lecturing, but I wish she wouldn't, unless she is very sure beforehand that she has something to say. And it isn't modest for every lecturing lady to call herself a rival of Anna Dickinson. Every once in a while some little lady fleshes out upon the public and is advertised as the rival of Anna Dickinson, and then winks out like a tallow dip before the wintry blast. Bless you! There never was a rival of that inimitable Anna in America, and what's more, there never will be.

ZIG.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY OLIVE KING.

DEAR POST:—

"Jumping over gutters,
Wading through the flood,
Ploughing through the slush,
Tumbling in the mud,
Squatting in the puddles—
Bless me! this is nice,
Stopping through the water,
Slipping on the ice."

That expresses it exactly.

I have done all the above in the last week, and I have not been alone in my experiences either. I presume I have seen a hundred ladies lose their equilibrium, and as though that wasn't sufficient, every one lost her temper at the same time, and anathematized the cruel fate that compelled her to "Walk dat Broadway down" in such a slushy time. I did not blame them much, for the pavement during a January thaw is a miserably wet, cold, uncomfortable seat, and when one drops with what a poet would call "enthusiastic suddenness" it isn't as soft as a spring mattress.

But I did not set out to give a lecture on the "Streets of New York," and by your leave, shall not refer to the subject again—at least, not so long as

FASHION

gives us as many novelties of which to speak.

But before proceeding further, permit me to ask what there is dressy or graceful or pretty in those little silk cravats "mit fringe all around 'em," that the ladies are so fond of wearing. I don't like them, they jar on my sensibilities and make me nervous and unhappy. I don't possess one myself, and if any of my friends in an unexampled fit of generosity should present me with one, I should give it to the "sewing society" to send to the poor heathen. They give an old maidish look to the prettiest sixteen-year-old girl that ever pinned one around her white shoulders; while a mature damsel of twenty-three with one on, looks old enough to be her own grandmother, and she need not try to captivate any one while she wears it, for she can't do it.

I don't know where the fashion comes from, I am sure—we did not have any such ridiculous ideas during Eugenie's reign, and if for no other reason I wish she was back again in her old place just to regulate the fashions, and keep us from looking ridiculous.

The way the ladies wear their sashes is another absurdity, and reminds one of "Dick's hatband that went half way round, and tucked in—" only the sashes don't tuck in; they go half way around the waist, and are pinned at each side, while the long ends are caught together nearly at the bottom of the dress, and tied in a huge bow. Some admire the style, and say that nothing could be more careless and graceful. I am willing to admit the careless part, but "pass" on the graceful. I suppose it is intended that sashes nowadays shall correspond with the long narrow trailing style of dress so popular with fashionables, and I don't know but they do; and perhaps, add a little to the general effect; but when a general effect is not good to start with, every little addition that enhances that effect should be avoided, and so I say I shall not tie my sash down nearly to the bottom of my dress; not even to copy my rich relations, for when one preaches one should practise, or the critics will have something to say about "insincerity of purpose," whatever that may mean.

But for all I may grumble about these little eccentricities of the toilet, I must say the air of solidity and plainness observable in winter costumes is gratifying—and although the seal-skin jacket, and muff, and brown dress of Irish poplin, and the "rich not gaudy" bonnet, may make six hundred dollars look very sick, there is nothing to indicate wilful extravagance. And that reminds me that notwithstanding the "slings and arrows of outrageous" men, women are improving, and instead of wanton waste, they now take a commendable pride in fixing over their dresses, and re-trimming them until the "auld claes look a'most as weel as the new," and instead of the idea that a lady could never appear twice in the same dress, I know plenty who have the reputation of always being tastefully arranged, who make one dress do frequent duty for two and three seasons, and that without other remodeling than they can themselves manage to get through with. The principal cost of dress now-a-days is in the labor of making. A jacket or cloak which would have cost ten dollars ten years ago, now costs twenty-five or thirty. A silk hat that could then be bought or made for fifteen, now commands forty-five at the least calculation. Ladies, therefore, are obliged to spend much more money on their clothes without being any better dressed, so long as they patronize the shops where ready-made garments are kept. Consequently, much latent ingenuity has been developed—and by a little care and labor, five hundred dollars can be made to go farther than a thousand spent on ready-made clothing, and at the same time give a much neater and richer appearance.

The very latest designs in cloth costumes are severe in their simplicity. They consist of a gored skirt cut rather long behind, and over this a long, plain coat of the same shade, open in front and the corners turned back to form *revers*. The cuffs and collar show the under side of the cloth, and together with the *revers*, afford abundant relief to the austere plainness of the suit.

At least that is what they said in the furnishing-house where it was on exhibition, and I was too glad to see anything like a return to plain dressing to question the truth of the statement. The fact is I am so tired of all this puffing and ruffling and scalloping everything that I would never say a word if fashion should flop right around, as she always is doing, and give us our dresses without "fold or gather." And, between ourselves, I am looking for a complete revolution. I wouldn't be afraid to bet five hundred thousand dollars that ruffles and flounces, and overskirts and polonaises would all die a natural death within six months; and I am confident that a year from this present date we will, any of us, be ashamed to go into the street in anything but a plain, quiet costume, and will wonder how we ever could have endured those horrid ruffles and things. And they are horrid, that's a fact.

Statistics show that where we have one sound, healthy, well woman we have one hundred delicate invalids, and I don't believe it is anything but the ruffles. In the first place they are an awful weight to carry, and, in the second place, it is a task of no mean proportions to tell all your dear five hundred lady friends about those ruffles and just how wide the wide ones are, and just how narrow the narrow ones, and how many rows of ruching separate them, and how many milliners' folds were used in the headings, and how many extra yards of cloth were required for those ruffles, and how many hundred yards of stitching it took. No, I don't like ruffles, and we are growing more sensible. Though, now that I think of it, the old fashion that disappeared two or three years ago is back again. I refer to the low-cut necks of the dresses. I have no objection to them in the summer, they look "cool and convaynient" then, but with the thermometer at zero it seems to me that something besides a locket between woman and the weather is required. The ladies who affect that style, however, declare that they are not cold one bit, and that it is all wrong this idea of bundling up the throat. Perhaps it is, but I had hoped that ladies had had enough of bare necks on winter days, and was both grieved and surprised to see lockets again taking the place of furs.

IN THE GLOAMING.

BY HENRIETTA E. DE CONDE.

Red-capped piles of blue-white cloud banks,
Golden gleams at parting light,
Shadows long in stately phalanx,
Climb to tree-tops sun-kissed bright.

Twittering song-birds, lowing cattle;
Leaves that whisper in the breeze;
Flowers in dreamy fragrance folding
All their petals 'neath the trees;

Tinkling cow-bells, bleating lambkins,
Echoing call of milkmaid gay;
Lusty song of hurrying yeomen
From the fields of new-mown hay.

Where the rippling brooklet wanders
Through the field of cradled wheat,
Soft-eyed Jeanie waits, and wonders
Why the twilight hush is sweet.

Through the wood, across the meadow,
Comes he to the trysting-tree
Whom she waits for, whistling, thinking,
"Bonnie Jeanie waits for me!"

Dew-sweet gloaming! Tender gloaming!
Lingering fragrance of the light;
Glad hearts bless thy misty curtain,
Kiss and whisper, "Sweet, good-night."

HOME AND SOCIETY.

HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

The first object which Hannah More had in view, in the schools she founded, was to teach the principles as well as the practice of domestic economy. She taught the ten servants connected with her home at "Barley Wood," in such a manner that they could conduct homes of their own in an economical yet progressive way, and she felt that her relations to her servants involved responsibilities which she could neither ignore nor delegate to others.

She knew, as we know now, that one-half of the want and misery which dwells among the poor, proceeded from an utter ignorance of the details of housekeeping; and a lack of economy in disposing of their "ways and means." So she did not disdain to impart freely from her stores of experience and knowledge to those around her; and built up for herself a very deserving name and reputation.

Since the days of Hannah More, there have been schools established upon a so-called practical basis, which while they taught the languages and the whole *curriculum* of literature and the sciences, have endeavored to sandwich between the courses of study a little housework; and have expected the scholars to perform the drudgery of the house.

But these schools have never taught the ethics of economy in the least degree. Now there is true refinement in a wise economy which devotes its leisure moments in preparing articles of household adornment out of bright, pretty scraps of ribbon, silk, woollen, etc., and thus utilizing many an article which in most houses is wasted by the children, or thrown into the rag-bag. From these scraps we have seen comfortable stools, chair cushions, mats, brackets, etc., produced; and it is really surprising how many pretty things, which add much to the decoration of a room, one pair of cunning, swift hands can devise and make up.

In a series of articles upon "Home and Society" we propose to tell our readers of these ingenious designs which will make the poorest room assume a neat and even elegant appearance. There is a right and a wrong way of doing everything; and even a patch upon your boy's pantaloons if put in all across the pants and into the seam at both sides, pressed and made to match exactly, will not look like a patch at all, at all. But if sewed right in over the tear, either in a round or square form, and not matched or pressed, why it stands out most ungainly, and proclaims to all beholders that it is a patch and nothing else.

We can practice economy with our air-tight stoves, and save a great amount of fuel, if we did but know how to care for them. We build up a roaring fire, throw all the dampers wide open; and this is very well in the morning when we must cook the breakfast as rapidly as possible, and also warm the room; and it is good economy at night, when the winds howl cold and chilly, and the blast rushes in at every crevice, and the husband and children return home damp and weary, then it is well to open all the dampers and trim the lamp to burn brightly, and greet their return with cheery warmth and brilliant light and a good supper, and teach them to feel that there is no place half so bright nor half so happy as their own dear home, and no more loving and tender wife and mother. But after breakfast, and after dinner, shut up the dampers; one half of the wood and coal you burn would contribute more to your health and comfort. Your eyes are dull and languid from the intense heat, and your flesh is hot and dry, and you are forced to open the doors to enable you to breathe.

Ah! well, open the doors, let in the fresh air of Heaven which is such a priceless boon to all—and because it can be had without money and without price, is not appreciated half enough. Air your rooms every day, dear friends; but learn to shut the dampers of your stoves when you are not cooking; and don't burn out enough coal or wood while simply boiling your tea-kettle, to bake a batch of pies, or cook a large dinner.

Sift your coal, then dampen the cinders with water, and put two shovelfuls of them on the top of your bright coals; then shut your dampers—and see how much warmth your stoves will throw out. At night open the dampers, and let the blue flame burn up through the cinders. At bed time put on some dry cinders, and shut the dampers tightly. Then you will need no charcoal nor kindlings to make the coal ignite the next morning, for there will be enough hot coals to do this.

Cover up a stick or two of half-burned wood in your air-tight stove, with sawdust or ashes, and you will not need kindlings.

The fire on our hearth is never extinct from November to May. A heavy stick of unburned wood is covered up every evening with quantities of blazing coals, and heaps of ashes laid over them; and the next morning a large shovelful of blazing coals is uncovered.

A little intelligence, rightly directed in household matters, makes a wonderful difference in the expenditures of the year; and household economy, thus viewed, becomes a dignified talent.

"Consult your means, amid the tempter's wiles,
Shun grinning hosts of unreceipted files;
Let Heaven—y'd prudence battle with desire,
And win the victory, though it be through fire."

Woman's extravagance and disregard of expenditures have been preached up long enough. There are few women in the middle classes who can equal men in their daily extravagances. Our friend A must take a glass of beer with Mr. B. daily,—"only ten cents, a mere trifle." He must smoke three cigars, at least, a day—"that's nothing."

Oh! nothing but forty cents a day, and that's only $146 00 a year, and would pay the premium on a life-insurance policy, which at your death might save your wife and children from starving. Few women spend forty cents a day on useless things, like beer and cigars. Do you think they do?

Women do like to dress prettily and neatly. And why is this? Because from their earliest childhood they have seen gentlemen pay the most attention to those who are so attired. It is men who give to women the desire to look well, *i. e.*, dress as stylishly and becomingly as they possibly can; and it is well that they should do so, but at the same time they should endeavor to keep the expenses of the household and of their dress within the range of the yearly income, and not deprive themselves of books, newspapers, chromos and engravings, to become the possessor of one more "*suit*." We read occasionally that there are many married women who impoverish their husbands by their insane passion for dress, and who carry their fortunes upon their backs, etc., etc., *ad nauseam*.

Now we firmly believe, that where there is one woman who reduces her family to beggary by her extravagance—there are at least a hundred men who waste their substance in *little* trifling daily expenditures. A dollar-bill once broken, goes quickly; and a dollar a day, mounts up to three hundred and sixty-five dollars in a year.

Economy is at once a duty and a science; and it should be equally studied and practised by men as well as women.

We weary of the cry against "*the woman that Thou gavest me*," commenced by Adam, and re-echoed by his meanest son.

Time, labor, and care are necessary to secure economy; and it will never become irksome if one is early instructed in the art.

There is an economy which is sheer parsimony—and with that we do not deal; its exercise brings its own reward, and those that possess it are sadly deserving of pity; and there is a shiftlessness, the deepest feeling of helplessness, and we do not appeal to that.

But we write for intelligent men and women, who desire to adorn their homes and make them brighter and happier by the exercise of economy and ingenuity.

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

THE BIBLE:

Illustrated by Oriental Usages.

No. 31.

"Signs" and Stars.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

"Be not dismayed at the signs of Heaven, as the heathen are dismayed at them." This charge to God's chosen people by the mouth of his prophet, (Jer. x. 2,) has occasioned many quibbles among the learned, and is not unfrequently regarded as referring to the practise of astrology, so universally esteemed, and everywhere consulted, among Oriental nations. But all my own observations in the East, led me to quite a different interpretation of the prophet's meaning, and I have not a doubt that the allusion is entirely to the terror everywhere manifested by Asiatics, at the occurrence of a solar or lunar eclipse, and indeed all unusual phenomena of the heavenly bodies. Such events are always regarded as evil omens—the harbingers and tokens of great public calamities; and by them, the heathen *are* certainly "dismayed"—frequently to the extent of temporary insanity—occasionally, to hopeless and incurable madness. I well remember a case almost parallel to that of Nicias, the Athenian general, whose "dismay" at an eclipse occurring just as he was about to leave Sicily, cost him his own life, the ruin of his splendid army, and a train of an unutterable evils to his devoted country. One of the Rajahs of Tringano—the last who could claim the name of an independent sovereign, fell into a like snare. His fair and fertile domain had been invaded by a Siamese army, with a shrewd and determined general at its head. But the Malays are a fierce and warlike race, and they drove back the invaders at every point, giving no quarter to their foes, and refusing to treat on any terms. The valiant Siamese, Phya-Si-Bi-Pat had suffered immense loss, with the flower of his army cut to pieces, while his only son, noble young officer, lay weltering in blood at his father's feet. Utterly dispirited, the old general determined on the withdrawal of the miserable remnant of the brave army he had so recently disembarked, and was about, under cover of darkness, to take refuge in his ships, when just at this crisis, a lunar eclipse occurred. The Rajah, whose banner was a *crescent*, observing the sudden withdrawal of the moon's bright beams, interpreted the phenomenon into an indication of the desertion of his gods, and fled in "dismay" from the ground where he had just achieved so complete a victory. The Siamese general saw his advantage, rallied the remains of his shattered forces, and by a brilliant onset completely retrieved the fortunes of the day, causing the poor, terrified Rajah the loss of his crown and liberty, and ultimately of his life, for he died in exile of grief and mortification. His bravest warriors were borne in chains to the Siamese capital, and consigned to perpetual slavery; beautiful Tringano was reduced to a dependency of the Siamese crown, and so severe a wound was inflicted on the Malayan power, that the decline of their rule may be dated from this very catastrophe. All this was achieved, *not* because the *Siamese* are free from the fear of eclipses, but because their valiant commander had sufficient *tact* to turn their superstitious fears to account by telling them that the eclipse augured *evil to their enemies*, and of course *good to themselves*. The result was precisely that which followed the assurances of the Egyptian soothsayers, when Alexander's terrified army, just before the battle of Arbela, throwing down their arms in "dismay" at an eclipse of the moon, refused to proceed on their march from the Tigris, till opportunely instructed that lunar eclipses were always omens of special calamity to their enemies, the Persians!

Despite the rapid increase of the means and appliances of education, and the general diffusion of knowledge over the earth, we find still in our own day eclipses regarded with extremest terror and "dismay" by nearly all Eastern nations. On many such occasions I have seen hundreds of men, women and children, armed with huge gongs, cymbals and tom-toms, rush frantically through the streets, their garments torn, hair dishevelled, and their countenances exhibiting the wildest "dismay" at the catastrophe which they honestly suppose to be the attempts of a huge demon to annihilate the sun or moon. In this diabolical purpose they say he will some time or other inevitably succeed, and would have done so long ago, but for their frightening him off! It is for this purpose that gongs, kettle drums, and every noise-producing instrument that can be improvised are brought into requisition, producing as their combined result a din and clangor more insufferable than bedlam itself. When the eclipse has passed, the shrieks and groans are exchanged for songs, exultations and rejoicings, that for the nonce the monster has been frightened away, and the heavenly bodies saved from so ignominious a fate as being gulped down the throat of their fierce adversary. So potent is early prejudice that *intelligent* Orientals have often assured me, in all gravity and sincerity, that should they fail to use the requisite means for the liberation of the heavenly bodies from the malice of the monster *Rahu*, he would *perpetually* obscure their brightness and at length wholly annihilate them, *leaving our entire system in impenetrable gloom*. If, in the present state of advanced civilization and the rapid increase of scientific knowledge, such fears still obtain among so many nations of the old world, we cannot wonder that in days of comparative ignorance God should have charged His favored people not to be "dismayed at the signs of heaven," as the idolatrous and superstitious nations about them were "dismayed at them."

From the peculiar, mental characteristics of Orientals, as well as from the nomadic life led by many tribes, especially those of *Western* Asia, there is an intense love of "star-gazing," and an insatiable desire to peer into their secrets, and find out from their hidden depths, some connection, for weal or woe, with our own planet. Hence the frequent allusions in Scripture, to the *stars;* and the peculiar phraseology, so perfectly in accord with an Oriental's modes of thinking, scattered everywhere through the inspired volume

When God promised to the aged patriarch that the progeny of his only son should be greatly multiplied, he says, "I will multiply thy seed as the *stars* of Heaven." Israel's sweet singer, when he would exalt the wisdom and power of the Supreme Ruler, says, "He numbers the stars, and calls them by their names;" and again when bowing in deepest humility and self-abasement, he exclaims, "When I consider Thy Heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the *stars* that Thou hast ordained—what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" As figurative of disgrace or public calamity, Joel says, "The stars shall withdraw their shining." Amos speaking of the idolatry of the Israelites in the wilderness, tells us, "They carried along with them, the *star* of their god." The expected advent of the Redeemer of mankind, is again and again alluded to, as the coming of a "*Star* out of Jacob," (Num. xxiv., 17,) "the bright and morning *Star*," (Rev. xxii. 16,) &c; and false teachers are described by Jude, (v 13,) as "Wandering stars," disappointing all just expectations, and exposing to destruction all who came in contact with them, like a planet in the erratic course of a fiery comet. To caution the Jews against the idolatry prevailing everywhere around them, Moses tells his people, that *God gave the stars their being;* and Job, (ch. xxxviii., 7,) describes the stars as praising the great Creator, and *shouting together for joy*.

The "shepherds watching their flocks by night," the Persian Magi, or "wise men," and Herod himself, seem to have understood at once, that the "star in the East" denoted the birth of one of more than ordinary note. And after the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, the famous impostor, *Bar-chalsba*, caused himself to be called *Bar-cocheba*, "Son of the Star," pretending to be the veritable Messiah—thus involving the Jews of Palestine in a revolt, that but precipitated the ruin of this doomed people.

And thus we find it, to-day, all over the East—in their poetry, their religion, everywhere, these allusions in highly-wrought, beautiful metaphors, to the bright gleaming *stars* they so love to watch and to study.

Too Much For His Nerves.

AN INCIDENT IN A MOONLIGHT RIDE.

[From the San Francisco (Cal.) Bulletin, Dec. 21.]

Several nights ago a young gentleman of this city invited a lady to accompany him on a moonlight ride. At the appointed time the wagon was at the door, and together they started for the Cliff House. During the ride the conversation turned on things supernatural, and the Donovan ghost was discussed at length. The gentleman professed to be free altogether from that dread of the mysterious unknown which deters some people from entering graveyards after nightfall, or sitting alone with the dead. He declared that he would even be willing to have a *tête-à-tête* interview with any ghostly visitant who might choose to make him a call in the still hours of night. After a couple of hours spent pleasantly at the Cliff, the horses' heads were turned homeward. The road was deserted, the pleasure-seekers had all returned, and as they bowled along the smooth road, still they conversed on the supernatural. When a short distance beyond the toll-gate the horses stopped suddenly, and began to tremble and snort violently. The driver stood up in the wagon to find out the cause, and lo! a coffin lay at the side of the road. The moonlight shone on the silver plate, and the courageous young man immediately let go the reins and dropped into the bottom of the wagon as if he had been shot. The lady fortunately caught the lines and thus prevented a runaway and probable disaster. As she was endeavoring to restore the presence of mind which had fled from her crouching companion, an undertaker's cart drove up, and the driver dismounting, lifted the coffin into it. "Get up," said the lady. "Is that horrid thing gone?" groaned the gentleman, and ventured to peep out from the buggy-robe in which he had wrapped his pallid face. It appeared that the undertaker was carrying the coffin to a house on Geary street, when his wagon broke down, and he was compelled to leave it on the roadside while he returned for repairs. The gentleman drove meekly home, and has not since been heard to declare his indifference to ghostly visitations.

Josephine's Sanctuary.

One room at Malmaison was especially consecrated by Josephine to the memories of happy days passed there by Napoleon before his divorce from her. It was a room then used by him as a study, whenever the cares of war or politics permitted him to seek a temporary rest in her society in that charming retreat; and when she was left there alone to mourn their separation, she would allow nobody to occupy this room but herself. In it lay the pen last used there by the emperor, which the ink had long since corroded; on a table lay the map he had last studied there, the line of march tracked out which had long since taught Europe to feel the power of his tactics; on the wall hung a glass case in which some of his hair was arranged in ornamental or symbolic form. It was so long since that hair had grown on his head that the sight of it must have carried back Josephine's memory to the time when she, the widowed Vicomptesse de Beauharnais, determined on marrying its owner, "the young soldier of fortune, with nothing but his love and his sword, and his cloak to offer her." Such a sanctuary indeed was this chamber at Malmaison to the ex-empress that she would not allow any hand but her own to dust or move the objects in it, which had been consecrated, as she deemed, by the touch of the husband who had sacrificed her to his ambition, and in so doing had lost the guiding star, the angel of his life.

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IN THE EVENING.

All day the wind had howled along the lea,
All day the wind had swept across the plain,
All day on rustling grass and waving tree
Had fallen "the useful trouble of the rain."
All day beneath the low-hung dreary sky
The dripping earth had cowered sullenly.

At last the wind had sobbed itself to rest,
At last to weary calmness sank the storm,
A crimson line gleamed sudden in the west,
Where golden flecks rose wavering into form.
A hushed revival heralded the night,
And with the evening time awoke the light.

The rosy color flushed the long gray waves;
The rosy color tinged the mountain's brown;
And where the old church watched the village graves
Wooed to a passing blush the yew-tree's frown.
Bird, beast and flower relenting nature knew,
And one pale star rose shimmering in the blue.

So, to a life long crushed in heavy grief,
So, to a path long darkened by despair,
The slow, sad hours bring touches of relief,
Whispers of hope, and strength of trustful prayer.
"Tarry his leisure," God of love and might,
And with the evening time there will be light!

HANDSOME.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.

Ne'er to brave the billows more,
A lonely wreck on Fortune's shore;
'Mid sullen calm and silent bay,
Unseen to drop by dull decay.

A September night, by turns stormy and fair; with, now, a heavy pall of indigo cloud stretched from horizon to horizon, blackening the world; now, the cloud broken, and rolling to and fro in fleecy masses, pierced with keen points of stars; now, earth and sea bathed in floods of moonlight, till every tall church tower, gray crag and crested wave shone, transfigured to silver in the dim glory, and pointed to Heaven like spirit-arms. The light-house tower, fifteen miles out at sea—damp with the spray that played always around its rocky base, and licked with foamy tongues its solid sides, as a wild beast licks its prey before sinews lacerate and bones crack under its cruel teeth—was silvered from its height to its foundations by the radiant stream, and stood like a temple, forlorn, pure, severe, unshaken by storm and sunshine, change of seasons and tides—cut off, like a human life, from tender daily troubles and joys, to be by its own suffering the salvation of others.

Often, in stormy weather, an awful white winding-sheet would curl to its topmost pinnacle, wring and shake it, and try to drag it down, till a shudder ran through all the stout masonry, and the light of the lamps, crimson and white by turns, quivered like bubbling blood on the churned billows; often the water artillery would rush, wave after wave, upon it, draw back again, to gather up its strength, and make fresh assaults, with the crash of cannon; often strange sea-fowl, driven by stress of weather, would alight on its summit, and vex the night with dismal unknown cries, and uncouth forms flitting around the great eyes of the lamp. To-night was, after all, only like most other nights in that dreary scene; the ordinary thunder of wind and rain, the ordinary desolation. In the "light-room," at the summit of the building, with a watchful yet abstracted eye on his charge, stood the one of the three keepers whose turn it was to be on guard. He had left the watch-room beneath, to correct some defect in the light, and now gazed upon it, wrapped in thought. The rule "that no bed, sofa, or other article for the purpose of reclining should be permitted in the watch-room," was no hardship to this man; and the weariest hour of his vigil was that when it ceased, when he threw himself on his bed, dreading already the heavy and melancholy waking sure to follow his melancholy dreams.

This day, two years ago, he came here first; since then, though in a measure forced by the rules of the service to take his turn of leave, he had spent those enforced periods in a fisherman's hut only less desolate than his present abode, almost within sight of it; and had come back, not so much sickened at its familiar, monotonous loneliness, as glad of its shelter from the eyes of his kind.

His companions thought "Mr. George," as they called him with involuntary respect, "queer;" for when, as sometimes happened in the winter, all communication with the mainland was cut off for weeks, and their own resources of amusement were exhausted, he would appear proportionately more tranquil in mind; would permit their society, instead of keeping apart; sleep, instead of walking up and down his room like a wild beast in a cage; and even talk to them, and tell them stories out of the books he had read, and about the "foreign parts" he had visited. They liked him, after a fashion, for he was always willing to keep double watch, or do double work of any kind, whether it were rubbing "reflectors," or pumping up oil from the works, or trimming wicks; and, silent as he was, he never sulked or quarrelled, as men shut up together without much occupation are apt to do. Only when Jim Saunders, the younger keeper, who was a bad marksman, shooting gulls from the gallery, wounded more than he killed, and the poor things lay about gasping, bleeding and broken-winged, on the rocks, Mr. George flew into a terrible passion; and having fetched his gun, and put them one and all out of their pain, unreasonably swore that if he, Jim, amused himself in that manner again, he would write to the authorities, and by mentioning sundry peccadilloes—of Jim's neglect of duty, &c.—get him removed. Jim's pastime was cut short accordingly, for both the men were aware that Mr. George (though he had of course passed the usual examination and probation) had got his appointment through some great man at the Trinity House, which is the supreme fetich of light-house keepers.

Yet, one day, when the elder keeper, Adam Lynn, remarked wistfully that "there was a strange kind of a bird, dragging its wing as if it was hurted, and he had a brother as was main fond of curiosities," Mr. George with his own hand shot the creature dead, sent his dog *Jack* to fetch it, and politely presented it to Adam.

"Gentlefolks has queer ways, and I'll lay he's a gentleman," remarked Adam, philosophically.

Mr. George's dog *Jack* was a character, and a much better companion than either Jim or Adam. A brown retriever, with a tightly-curled coat, rendered tighter by daily sea-baths, golden-hazel, plaintive, loving eyes, and a hoarse, pathetic voice which was almost human. *Jack* was a sensitive and affectionate but sullen and reserved personage. He had few friends—though, if let alone, he was civil to all; his love for the few he had was testified by a mesmerized, constant, mournful stare, as if he were trying to speak, accompanied by an occasional strangled whine, the gentlest hold (which could not crack an egg shell) of his big white teeth on the favored person's hand or garment, and the continual blunt patter of his padded feet in their wake. Up-stairs or down, on the crags, in the water, *Jack* was at Mr. George's heels, and woe to the individual who should try to hold him back from his master! He had jumped from the gallery round the light-house a dozen times, on seeing Mr. George on the granite ridges beneath. He had knocked Jim Saunders down, and hung to his nose, when the latter, in play, stood between him and the former; he flew barking and growling, open-mouthed, at the very waves, when they audaciously rose against Mr. George as he took his daily swim. In short, there was nothing he would not do for that adored being; and for once, happy among dogs, I think his adoration was worthily requited. *Jack* was absurdly loved by his lonely master; jealously, absurdly watched, to see if he showed preference for anybody else, and nursed through the diseases and accidents of his foolish puppyhood—"As if he were a Christian," said the others, scandalized.

However, they had grown accustomed to Mr. George's peculiarities by this time, even to his hatred of leave, and his extraordinary habit of shutting himself up when visitors came to lionize the light-house, thus losing his share of probable gratuities; and they liked and respected him all the better for the mystery that hung about him; which was perhaps human nature.

The bright glow of the sleepless lamp and the faint light of sunrise were struggling together in the light-house tower, as Mr. George stood looking out, remembering what day it was, and thinking, with a heavy sigh, how slowly the two years of his residence here had passed, what an enormously long vista of life, to all appearance, spread before him. Standing with his hand—a delicate, shapely hand, though deeply scarred—on *Jack's* rough head, *Jack* at his knee, still as a statue, he looked to right and left at the faint crimson flush deepening in the heavens, on the waves; the paling stars, the drifting clouds of lilac and gold, at the sea forgetting its wrath below, and the faint purple line of shore just visible in the extreme clearness of the early dawn. Fair things all; but oh! how weary to him!

"And I am only twenty-nine," said he, despairingly at last. "Oh, the years to come!" *Jack* uttered a sympathetic howl, and planting his paws on his master's leg, looked up adoringly.

"Yes, old fellow, I've got *you*," answered Mr. George, fondly. "But you'll die before I shall, most likely, and I shall be worse off than I am now. Ah, *Jack*, I wish you and I could change the span of our days."

Jack continued whining, staring, adoring; poor fellow, he had no other arts of comfort.

"What is it? You don't know what an idiot anybody would think you, to stare so at such an object as I am; though, perhaps in your eyes, you fond, stupid fool, I look different—because you love me. But you are only a dog, *Jack*, that's it, a brute, without a soul. Go away, sir; go down, and don't make a fool of me too."

Jack feigned departure; but secretly crept into a corner behind his master, and lay there like a stuffed dog.

Mr. George had not spoken untruly in calling himself an object; but there was something to stare at in him, though certainly not beauty. He was rather tall, and well proportioned, but disfigured by a slight stiffness and pain of gait and gesture, which extended to all his limbs; and while it did not affect their strength, and scarcely their rapidity of movement, was entirely fatal to grace. He had, however, fair, wavy curls, blue eyes, and a white skin; but across the right eyelid, to the roots of his hair, breaking the outline of the eyebrow, and making a purple line and a succession of deep dents on his forehead, ran a great scored scar; and beneath the left eye, and on the upper part of his nose, others began; though they, and whatever disfigurements existed elsewhere, were hidden by a large black handkerchief wrapped round and round, entirely concealing even the outline of the lower part of his face, and so firmly fastened inside his coat that no exertion or accident could disarrange it. As a consequence, there is little more to describe in the light-house keeper, except the profound, half-humiliated sadness of his eyes, and the hoarse, muffled, unnatural sound of his voice emerging from under the close wrapper.

He stood long motionless, but at last roused himself with a start, extinguished the lamp, and having trimmed and burnished it in readiness for next evening, and seen that all was in order—no very brief task—he descended the ladder, and with *Jack* slinking close at his heels, sought his own apartment. It was very small, with a certain likeness to a ship's cabin; but without any of the clever contrivances or odd ornaments often seen in such places. It was as bare as the hole of a hibernating animal, as a cell in a prison, as the torpid, ugly, loveless life of its owner, Mr. George did not go to bed, but sat down on his one chair, and leaning back, looked deep into vacancy; whereat *Jack* crept up, and sitting on his haunches before his master, threw back his head, and opened his mouth with a half-inaudible whine of sympathy.

"*Jack!*" said Mr. George, suddenly, struck with a bitter thought. (He was a morbid person, and, for want of anything more satisfactory to hug, hugged his woes.)

"*Woa!*" replied *Jack* with sharp emphasis, beating his tail on the floor, and quivering all over with repressed anxiety to go actively about his master's will.

"You shall see such a thing as you never saw in your life before; and if it makes any difference to you—as the chances are it will—I swear I'll send you ashore by the next boat that comes. Look here, then, sir!"

Jack's comprehension was happily not quite full enough for the latter part of this speech to distress his canine mind. He only understood that something was to be explained to him, perhaps—blissful idea!—to be followed by something which he was to do. So he kept his eye on his master, as was his custom when a new trick was taught him, and waited patient and trustful while Mr. George slowly loosened the folds of the black handkerchief he wore, let it drop, and stooping his face down, close to his dumb friend, said, in a sharp, strained voice: "*Now*, sir! Do you know me? *Jack!*"—in a voice of sarcasm—"do you *love* me now?"

Jack rose up on his hind legs, put his paws on his master's shoulders in an almost human caress, and with a great whine of love, pity, and anguish, licked his face. Then a shower of hot tears fell on his shaggy coat, and a broken voice said humbly: "Poor, dear *fool!* God made this dog; perhaps there's hope yet."

Bright weather had set in that September day; but one morning, a little later, to experienced eyes it showed signs of change. The gay green sea still broke in harmless crystals against the light-house rocks; the sky was clear blue overhead; brown-sailed fishing-smacks, tiny boats, and a few white-winged yachts, still glided fearlessly over the bright ripples; but the coast-line looked ominously near and clear, and a few threads of long purple cloud lay straight, as if ruled there, across the pale horizon.

"Bad weather comin' up; we'll light early to-night," said Adam Lynn.

Mr. George acquiesced with languid indifference, and continued to pace monotonously up and down a path he had worn for himself on the narrow domain, with *Jack* behind him as usual.

"Don't care for nothing under the sun, it's my belief," muttered Adam, looking after him as he walked away; and he was not far from the truth.

That afternoon, as Mr. George sat reading in his room with *Jack*, that animal was seized with violent and unaccountable excitement. He ran and smelled at the door, growling wickedly in an undertone; returned, and looked up at his master expressively, as much as to say: "An enemy of ours;" repeated the process, and finally lay down between him and danger, with open eyes, and his head between his fore-paws. Mr. George was depressingly indifferent, and took no heed. Presently Jim Saunders entered agitated, and announced that "a gentleman as had been out a-fishin' from one of them yachts in the offing had been took ill, and put in at the light-house, to get brandy and such like."

"Says he can't bear the motion o' the boat," said Jim, grinning unsympathetically. "Wants to lie down and have a doctor. A bad plucked one, for all he's so big and black. I told him as he'd best go back to her (the yacht) or to shore; but he says no; and when he hears old Adam was a bit of a doctor, nothing would keep him out of here. So the boat's gone to bring her as near as may be, that he may get aboard; and there he lies groanin', a rare 'un, in Adam's berth. Can hear him from here, Mr. George, you can."

"The dog does," said Mr. George shortly and carelessly: and Jim went away.

Late that afternoon, as Mr. George was going up to take his watch, with his hand on *Jack's* neck, to prevent the dog's racing up joyfully before him, he passed the open door of Adam's room, and glancing absently in, stood fixed to the spot, grasping *Jack* till he was nearly asphyxiated. The sick man lay on the narrow bed, a fever-flush on his cheek, the rest of his face of a yellowish pallor; his black hair lay damply on his forehead, and his dark eyes were open, and rolling restlessly. He did not see who looked at him—he was too much occupied with his own fears and sufferings—and only started and muttered fretfully as *Jack* gave a low snarl of strange intuitive aversion, and struggled a little under his master's gripe.

The sound broke the spell that paralyzed Mr. George, and recalled him to the gentler feelings poor *Jack's* blind love had awakened. He said in a hoarse whisper: "Brydone, *Brydone!*" and rushed headlong up the steep stair, away from the sight which maddened him.

He kept his watch, went down afterward, averting his head resolutely from "*that* door," paced his room, and at last slept from pure exhaustion.

The old weary routine went on next day, with double duty; for the weather was so stormy, no boat dared approach the rocks round the light-house, and the strange "gentleman" was worse, and occupied much of Adam's time, without any happy results however attending the latter's confused attempts at treatment.

So passed another day. On the third, while Jim was up-stairs cleaning, Adam came with a grave face to his third companion.

"The gentleman—Brydone, he says, his name is—is uncommon bad," said he.

Mr. George sat immovable and gloomy.

"*I* think he'll get over it," continued the other, sinking his voice. "But *he's* sure he's dying. And there's a something on his mind tries him so awful; it *may* kill him if he don't get rid of it, no doubt. I told him what I thought, and asked, would he tell me. But he said, wasn't there any one above me, a superintendent, like, to hear it. I says no; but there was Mr. George, as had been a gentleman, and never a better hand at holding his tongue—which is true, sir."

"Well?"

"Well; and you'll come to him?"

"No," said Mr. George hastily; "I can't; it's impossible. Let him tell you."

"He won't. I've been persuading him all day to; but he's got a sick *fancy* about it. You wouldn't refuse a dying man, Mr. George? You'll die yourself some day. And if you don't like him to *see* you," added Adam deprecatingly, mindful of his hearer's peculiarities, "I'll take the candle away; the light does hurt his eyes. Just satisfy him, sir, and I believe you may save his life."

What was Mr. George muttering under his breath? "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life." What, next moment, came into his mind? following the other mechanically, indeed, learned long ago in childish tasks, but vivid with the strength of the Truth: "But *I* say unto you, *love* your enemies." He rose from his chair, pulled the handkerchief higher over his face, and made *Jack* lie down in his corner.

"Yes, take away the candle," said he, faintly. "I'll come."

And I think there was something in this, quietly as it was done, of that "victory which overcometh the world."

He went in softly to the darkened room, and felt his way to a chair by the bedside. A hot bony hand felt for his, and clutched it fast.

"You have come," said a harsh voice that made him shudder, in spite of his self-command, and draw his breath hard. "Thank you—God reward you. You are a gentleman, these fellows say."

"Yes," said Mr. George in a whisper.

"You'll keep my secret, then. But it's a horror—a *horror*, I tell you," he continued, without waiting for a reply. "I could not die with it on my soul." Then, with frequent pauses, despairing blasphemies alternated with wild inquiries: "*Can* God forgive me? *Dare* I have hope?" Brydone told the story of his crime, to an auditor who sat breathless as himself, with heart throbbing like thunder in his ears, with the sweat standing on his forehead, and the hand the sick man would not let go, icy cold.

"After I left Penorna," said Brydone presently, "I travelled from place to place, without resting. How *could* I rest, with *that* behind me? But there never was a precipice but I seemed *to see* him fall down it, nor a sea in which he was not struggling, nor a cry anywhere that did not say those same words he said as he died.—And yet, I loved her so; I did, did love her—I could not give her up. Nobody else had such a right to her as I; nobody else had done murder for her sake. I went back, found her out, and was with her. I let her talk to me about *him*, and cry over his picture, though her tears burned me like hell-fire. And by degrees she got to trust me, and lean on me, and like me. Now, at last, she loves me, and in a month we were to have been married—she, whom I sinned for, whom I've borne this torture for. Oh, Netta!"—with a terrible cry—"I can't die now, and go to my punishment; I must have you, just a little, first. Am I to gain nothing, and be lost forever? Oh, God! I will not die!" His voice failed, and there was a long pause.

Then Mr. George said very softly, and with a strange sad tenderness in his voice: "Does she love you now?"

"She does—she vowed it. And in a month—"

"Hush?" said the other with a sudden authority, yet in a bitter tone. "You will not die; your pulse is stronger—I've been feeling it—and your voice—and— No, Mr. Brydone, you'll live, and go back to her, and be happy. And perhaps"—with tremulous passion that would force its way—"perhaps that Heaven of happiness may make you repent what hell couldn't! I trust it may." Then he rose, went abruptly away, and locked himself into his room. He stayed there so long, and was so silent, and *Jack* whined so pitifully, that the others were alarmed; but his voice reassured them, saying impatiently: "Nothing, nothing. I am ill; let me alone."

Within, he was kneeling down, with a white, convulsed face, in the middle of the room, pressing the dog to his side with one arm, with the other raised to Heaven, fighting a harder battle, doing a nobler deed, according to his light, than half the actions which stars and medals, rank and wealth, reward.

He had won the victory; crouching on the floor, with his arm round his dog's neck, with his whole frame released from its tension of agony, relaxed and helpless, with the flickering, failing candle-light full on that pale disfigured mask which had once been a face smiling on life, as life seemed to smile on it—he knew it himself. So look Heaven's victors often, on this side their reward.

Brydone recovered, and with his recovery came unspeakable alarm at his own madness in confessing his crime to a complete stranger. He felt an instinct that it would be vain to attempt to bribe his silent hearer—that to throw himself on the latter's honor was his only chance. So, with a sinking soul, before he departed in the yacht's boat, which had come to fetch him, he requested Adam to send "the gentleman" to him.

Mr. George came, and stood with downcast head and muffled face till Adam was out of hearing; then he shut the door, returned, and said with quiet and sad bitterness, and his eyes fixed full on the other's: "Don't you know me, Brydone?"

Brydone staggered back against the wall with uplifted hands, and eyes so widely opened that the white showed all round the dark irises; his yellow cheek grew fearfully pale, and his clammy lips could scarcely mutter: "You—you!"

"I, Tempest!" said the other calmly. "Not dead, indeed; but worse than dead. I have *my* story to tell, now. You had better sit down, while you hear it."

Brydone obeyed, mechanically, muttering to himself with dry lips. Then he suddenly started up, caught Tempest by the arm, and, dragging him to the light, stared intently in his face. Tempest's eyelids quivered, and his eyes dilated painfully at the scrutiny, and a flush, long a stranger there, crept over his forehead; but he endured it calmly, and when Brydone fell back on his seat, began gravely, but in a matter-of-fact tone, rather as if he were telling another man's story than his own, the sad relation.

"I did not see who pushed me over the cliff—I felt it done. I knew I did not fall of myself; but I could not see the person. I just thought of calling to her that I had found her locket, and that was all. When I came to myself, I was lying on the rocks below, writhing in agony, blind with the blood that ran in hot streams over my face every moment, and without power to move a finger, or cry out for help. I believed I was dying, and I tried to pray; but somehow I could only think of her little locket, and of the bright morning beside the sea at Penorna. I lay there, feeling wave after wave come coldly up, each a little farther than the last. I got numbed, body and mind, at length, so that I suffered little, and didn't care what happened; till something moved near, and somebody touched me, and cried out: 'Oh, poor, poor creature; the Lord have mercy on him! His face is all crushed to pieces.' That woke my mind at least, and I managed to put up this right hand, which was the only part of me not injured, and feel my face. Brydone, I couldn't feel *anything*, for I had dragged it against the sharp rocks all the way down, in trying to save myself. My nose was broken, and my cheek cut almost in half, and this eye—"

"Hush, for God's sake!—hush, I say!" cried Brydone fiercely; "you don't know what you're saying."

"Well, I certainly need not tell you that—you can imagine it," said Tempest, still quietly; "at any rate, when I saw how I was disfigured, and yet felt I might live a day or two, I made the people who had found me (a fisherman's widow and her two boys, who lived in a hut built under the cliff, close by) promise to say nothing of my existence. I suppose it was my vanity," said he, laughing bitterly; "I couldn't bear that *she* should see me so; I thought if she knew I were so hurt, perhaps dying, she would want to come to me—and from the very first moment till now, I have had her face always before me as it might—*must* have looked, if she had seen—this;" and he laid his hand on the black handkerchief.

Brydone shuddered, and hastily and guiltily averted his gaze.

"I shall not show it you," said Tempest coldly; "don't fear. Well, these people promised. They dragged me to their hut, and there I lay, between life and death, for weeks; never without pain—never, never without the consciousness of what had happened to me—of how my life, and my love, and my hopes were all blighted. They were kind to me in their rough way—did their best—and kept my secret faithfully. There was no other cottage for miles round, and nobody knew of my existence even. By the time I was enough myself to think matters over, six weeks had passed. I knew my death would by that time be imagined and announced; that, therefore, the shock to Netta would be over. I thought she was so young—had known me such a little while—she would soon forget me. Whereas, if I went to her, and said: 'This hideous, disfigured, maimed wretch is Dolly Tempest, who was to have been your husband'—she would either keep her vows to me from honor and pity only, and be miserable, or give me up in horror, with that look with the fear of which I had always been haunted. Both ways, for us both, concealment seemed best. Then I had been so proud of my good looks—do you remember, Brydone, what an ass you thought me?—perhaps I was one," and his voice trembled a little; "I was very happy. I couldn't endure the idea of meeting my friends and all the people I had known; so changed—such a miserable spectacle; of being noticed from pity, and all that. So, while I was getting up my strength, I thought matters over, and I determined—"

"But," began Brydone huskily, "did you never wonder who—" His voice failed.

"Yes, I did," answered Tempest; "but I had not the faintest suspicion of—you. At first, I thought it might have been some tramp, who saw the locket in my hand, and wanted to rob me; afterwards— However, as I said, when I thought things over, I resolved to change my name, and get this sort of post. A light-house I had seen, as I stood by the shore that happy morning with her, made me think of it; and I got morbidly fond of the idea, and cared as much for it as I have ever cared for anything since—I *fell*."

I don't know why Brydone's eyes, which been dry enough during all this sad narrative, should fill with sudden tears at that little pause; the simple words that followed, the half-sad, half-smiling gleam in the speaker's blue eyes. It was only Tempest's way of putting things, to spare his enemy pain; but it went to that enemy's hard heart.

"I had a friend high up at Trinity House," continued he, "and he promised to get me what I wanted; told me the little information I had to get up to pass the examination, gave me credentials, and all that. While I was still hiding in the hut, not caring what I did, so I *was* hidden, I used to creep out, late at night and early in the morning, under the cliffs, and throw stones into the sea, and think of Dolly Tempest, who was dead, and wish Mr. George, who came to life, might not have a long one. In one of these walks, just at the spot where I had fallen, where there were still bits of my clothes among the stones, I saw, wedged into a crevice, a stick with a silver head. I pulled it out, and read what was engraved upon it—you know. And then, Brydone, it flashed upon me who had made me what I was. For the first instant, I felt a devil in me."

Brydone started, with a stinging recollection of his own temptation, and how it had been met.

"But I prayed where I stood; and instead of taking it back, where my hosts might have found it, I hid it safe under the stones. I often came back, and looked at the place, and had black thoughts of revenge; but sometimes the moon shone, or the sun rose, or a bird sang in a bush at the top of the cliff, and stopped me. Well, I went up to London, taking only the fellow who got me appointed into my confidence, passed the examination and probation, and came here. Before I left the hut, I gave the people money enough to go back to Ireland, whence they had originally come—"

"And my stick?" interrupted Brydone breathlessly.

"I have it here."

"But—but I could not be—be— It would not be *death*," cried the unhappy man convulsively. "You are alive and well—the same as ever—Tempest; it could only be—"

"The same!" cried Tempest, starting passionately to his feet. "Do I look as I used to look, move as I moved, speak as I spoke? Could I go back to my old world, and ask a woman to marry such a thing as I? Are you a devil, that you can look at your work, and say that!"

"No, no," muttered Brydone, dropping his tone of wild defiance. "I didn't mean it—I did not know what I said." Then, in a hoarse whisper, and with heavy, horror-stricken eyes fixed on the other's face, he asked: "Then you mean to betray me, and get me punished, and go back and marry her after all?"

"No; I shall not marry her."

"And yet revenge yourself all the same on me? Have you *no* pity, Tempest? And yet," he groaned, covering his face with his hands, "I deserve it!"

There was silence for a moment, then a hand was laid gently on his shoulder. He looked up, and saw Tempest standing beside him, holding the silver-headed stick, that fatal piece of evidence.

"Brydone," said he, in a voice that faltered a very little; "God has mercy; shall I have none? See here!" He broke the stick in half, and flung the pieces across the room, out of the open window. "There goes the only proof. Upon my honor, I swear not to betray you. You must never let *her* know what you did, nor that I am living. Now go—be good to her—make her happy—good-bye."

He turned away, went to the window, and stood with his back to Brydone, looking out. He heard, dreamily, a heavy sob of deep relief, broken thanks, an unsteady tread receding, a door closed; a little later, the keel of the yacht's boat grated, parting, against the rock, and Brydone was gone. Tempest watched the skiff go dancing and courtesying over the sparkling billows, into a broad track of sunshine, grow smaller and smaller, and then reach the yacht. Soon after, she, too, sailed away landward, and was lost to sight. Then he returned to his own room, and looked vacantly round, with a furrowed brow, a hard eye, a hard heart too, for an instant. But *Jack* rushed out of a corner, sprang upon him and licked his face, his hands, his clothes, in an agony of love. Then Tempest's frozen heart melted, and crying out: "Oh, *Jack*, I've got nothing but you!" he sat down on his bed, and wept like a child.

Henceforth, nothing but monotony was before him, with a lonely death at the end. He resumed his dreary round of life. He lit and cleaned the lamps, took his watch, caressed *Jack*, and listened patiently to old Adam's yarns, and Jim Saunders' long winded narratives of the incidents of his leave. He made calm and mournful calculation that if he attained the ordinary age of mankind, as the Bible gave it, he must still have thirty years to live; and (though he shrank somewhat from the prospect) endeavored to accustom himself to life as other men do to death; for he knew that his general health was improving, the weakness and stiffness consequent on his terrible fall leaving his limbs gradually, and everything seemed against a speedy end to his troubles.

In a newspaper brought to the light-house a month after Brydone had left it, he read the announcement of the latter's marriage with Netta. *Jack* little knew what made his desolate master hold the great paw laid on his knee so fast, and caress it so fondly that night. That was at the end of November. Before another November had come round, Brydone had gone to his account, and Netta was a widow.

"But it makes no difference to *me*," said Mr. George bitterly.

Then his life settled down again, and two more years passed over his head.

CHAPTER IV.

Shall so much empire o'er the soul
Live in mere beauty's smile, and no control
Bind down the heart to keep a steadier faith?

In the third winter came a great storm, which was long remembered in those parts. A night and a day it had raged, and showed no signs of abating when night came round again, and the sun went down, staining the sky with angry sudden red, behind the last far-off inky billow of the indignant sea. Hour after hour, the light-house had shuddered from tower to base, glittered in the flashes of lightning with the long white streams of foam that ran down it, as the hungry surfs fell balked and hissing back into the black-green gulf below. Fragments of wrecked ships, gone to pieces Heaven knows how far off, but driven here by the fury of the tide, floated in the eddies among the rocks; young gulls washed out of their nests; strange sea-creatures and plants, torn from their deep retreats in foreign seas; and a homely boat, patched and sea-worn—a *Heather Bell*, or a *Pretty Susan*, from one of the fishing-villages on the coast—told its own sad tale. Through all, the supreme light, crimson and white by turns, burned steadily; and the three men stood together by it, watching the boiling ocean, holding their breath at the saddest thing of all a wrecked ship—a large yacht—foundering within sight, but out of reach of help. A dozen times they had tried to put out a boat to assistance, but had been hopelessly driven back by the violence of the storm, and now they stood helpless, with *Jack* among them, silent, bright-eyed, quivering with excitement, pressing against his master's feet, and looking up for sympathy.

"Dog 'ud like to save 'em, I'll be bound," said old Adam.

Mr. George made no answer; he was wondering if on board that wreck there were any man who loved life, and had good days before him he could not bear to miss, instead of twenty-seven years of desolate bondage.

"What's that," cried Jim Saunders, suddenly, "floating yonder on the piece of timber—something white?"

The other looked at it a moment, and drew his breath hard.

"Look after the light, Adam!" said he, with a voice of sudden authority.—"You, Saunders, come down with me. Don't stand staring there. It's a woman, I tell you, and I may save her yet."

"But no boat 'ud live, even if we could get her out," said Jim, breathlessly.

"It's close by," said Mr. George, with a certain calm recklessness. "I can swim."

"Yes, and get your brains knocked out against them rocks."

Mr. George laughed, and ran down the staircase.

A moment more, and with a rope round his waist, the other end of which was lashed to an iron stanchion in the wall, he was standing on the verge of the crag, *Jack* beside him, trembling with delighted eagerness, but well aware, by the strange instinct implanted in his race, that some grave and difficult work lay before him. Jim stood by watching, ready to guide the rope as far as was possible in such a sea; while the older man strained his eyes anxiously from the tower.

As to Mr. George himself, he was calm; measured his distance, and calculated chances under that awful sky, and before that awful ocean, as he might have done in the sunniest summer day. He had not been afraid of death, had desired it; yet when it came so near in, possibly, so cruel a shape, human nature shrunk somewhat from it.

No enthusiasm upheld him; he doubted his own power of saving the unhappy waif; he knew that his own fate might not be death, but a worse repetition of the torture he was too well acquainted with—a long life, perhaps, made absolutely helpless. A slight plaintive feeling came into his mind, of how dear life might have been; a prayer rose to his lips; he stooped, patted *Jack*, and spoke encouragingly to him, and then, gathering all his strength, sprang clear of the rock into the boiling waters.

From that moment he remembered little, save a fierce, incessant battle with the breakers, which fought him back from the white thing that gleamed every now and then before him, and stirred faintly. It was not like real life, it was like an awful fever-dream—the black night, the seething waters, the piercing, hissing blast; the fragments of plank and spar that bruised and tore his bare chest, as he struggled on, *Jack* fighting beside him. But there came a moment of delirious joy, when he grasped with one desperate hand, with his clenched teeth, a white garment, and felt against his chest the plank which supported it. The worst of the nightmare was past then.

He turned, and return was easier, for Jim cautiously tightened the rope, and drew him and the burden he guided slowly back. Then a watery moon broke out from a rift in the inky clouds, and a strange thing befel. As his cold, wet cheek touched something white, and wet and cold, which the waves drove against him, a vision of the bright, dead Past came back, clear as reality. There was no more furious ocean, black cloud, howling blast, no more lonely years before and behind him, no crippled life, pain or tears, or trouble any longer in the world. He was back again with his love, standing by the bright blue summer sea, the crystal ripples at his feet, the sunshine overhead, the soft western breeze around; with her little hand in his, her first vow trembling on his ear. He answered, blissfully: "Netta! Darling!"

"Dolly!"

Then a cold, bitter wave leaped up over his lips, about to gasp a passionate response, and broke the spell. Storm and midnight came down again and wrapped them like a shroud, and he knew, that though indeed, by a strange chance, he had rescued his old and only love, it was not for himself; that Dolly Tempest was forever dead, and only Mr. George, who might save other lives, but could never more take pleasure in his own, alive. Yet he struggled on, and at last, bruised, bleeding, exhausted, but with his precious charge still safe, was dragged ashore.

He did not hear Adam's congratulations, Jim's triumphant declaration: "*We've* saved one, too: she came driftin' up, on a boat bottom upward, to the very door;", nor even *Jack's* subdued whine of pain, for the poor brute had been dashed against the rocks and hurt; but with a last instinct committed his burden to Adam, gasped: "Take—take care of her!" crawled to his room, and fainted on the threshold.

When he came to himself, his first thought was that that moment of mutual recognition must be blotted out forever from remembrance. He saw that Netta might easily be made to believe it an illusion, the result of her own delirous terror, and, therefore, having resumed his customary disguise, caught Adam as he passed, and drawing him into the room, said in a voice whose stern falter gave his words weight: "If the lady asks who saved her, say, and let Saunders say, it was he, not I."

"Jim! Mr. George?" cried Adam, in surprise. "Why, Jim might follow well enough, but he'd never lead, nor do nothing of the kind you've done to-night."

"He must say so, nevertheless," said Mr. George, firmly and sadly; "I don't wish her to know of my existence, *now*."

Yet he was sick for sympathy at the moment, and so far forgot his reserve as to touch his muffled face significantly, and look mournfully at Adam. The old man understood his meaning partially.

"Eh, I wouldn't do that, sir," said he, kindly: "I'd let her know, and give her the chance. Women's queer cattle; but a lass isn't *always* caught by her eye."

But Mr. George turned away unconcerned, and repeated sharply, as if opposition hurt or tempted him: "Tell Jim."

Adam went away and did his bidding; and as Mr Saunders happened to be careless of truth in the abstract, and roughly faithful to his friends, he required neither persuasion nor explanation to obey Mr. George's request.

Accordingly, when Netta Brydone came to herself, and a faint, scarcely credible memory crossed her mind, her first eager question: "Are you the man who saved me?" was answered by Adam: "No, miss—ma'am [hopeless confusion as to the proper title]; that's him." Whereupon Jim advanced, and, with an air of calm self-satisfaction, received the praises and thanks which, after a moment's doubt and hesitation, she bestowed upon him freely.

She was ill with cold, fatigue and fright, and lay scarcely conscious for the first day, looking dreamily into the little fire, her maid (who was Jim's trophy from the sea) attending upon her. That lady, Mrs Barker by name, was conveniently and blindly ignorant of who had saved herself or her mistress, and how they had done it. She had been washed off the wreck as she was holding on to a boat, as the latter had been, and they had been "drownded" together, she said, and "thank 'evins!" had been "brought to life again in this awful place;" and that was all she knew.

Mrs. Brydone looked melancholy at this reply; for the more distinctly consciousness returned, the keener grew her belief in the reality of that voice in her ear, that touch on her cheek, that gleam—though only in the wild lightning, or the dim, fleeting moonlight—of a well-known face.

"Barker, is there another man in the light-house beside those two?" she asked, wistfully.

"Yes, ma'm; there is."

"What is his name? Do you know what he's like?"

"Mr. George, ma'am. A humpback, or deformed, or something, from what they says; and keeps out of sight always, and has quite a craze to be forever doing of his work," said Mrs. Barker, who, if the peculiarity mentioned were a symptom of insanity, was indubitably in the fullest possession of her senses.

Netta's heart sank: no description could be more unlike handsome, indolent Dolly. And then, how mad, how foolish she was to imagine he could be alive after all, just because, amid the din of the storm, a voice had sounded, a hand had felt, like his! Perhaps no voice had spoken, and it was all a dream; perhaps, in her peril, she had come so very near the gates of death, that his voice, who had passed through them years ago, had been able to reach her; for had

she not remembered him, her first love, always, and only married Brydone for her family's sake, and been a good wife to him because it was her duty? Perhaps— And so, dreaming, wondering, and unable fully to reason away her unreasonable hope, Mrs. Brydone fell asleep.

That day was a torture to Mr. George. When once he had done his work with fiery energy, and done Adam's and Jim's as well, and walked up and down his room till his limbs fairly failed beneath him; when he had fondly tended poor *Jack*, who, to add to his master's troubles, was sorely hurt—his courage failed; and, unable longer to keep his bitter thoughts at bay, he sat down, and gave them battle at close quarters. He asked himself, if, after all these years of trial and self-denial, he was so weak as to yield blindly to his own passions, declared himself alive and loving still, and grieve her tender heart, as he must do either way, whether she accepted or refused him; if he was such a coward—so mean as to wish her to link herself with a hideous object like him, from whom his kind must shudder and turn away. Had he let her suffer the shock of his supposed death, let Brydone go and win her—saved her precious life only yesterday, to force on her such a fate at last? His morbid fancy, darkened by his lonely life, conjured up again and again the certain look of horror and dismay on that face, which had smiled, fond, loving, admiring, in his, that sunny September day at Penorna. "Whatever might come afterward, I could never forget that first look. She *could* not love me now!" he groaned. "She could only pity, and wonder, and be ashamed of me. Love *me*? Impossible! Oh, God!" he prayed, dropping on his knees, "take her out of this place soon, and deliver me from temptation!" He might struggle, pray, resolve, but nature was too strong. That evening, when Adam and Jim were on watch up-stairs, Mr. George crept shoeless out of his room, and went noiselessly—fearfully, to the door of the apartment given up to Netta and her maid. The minute before he had sternly determined never to look upon her face again; the next, he had said: "But *this* cannot hurt her. She shall not see me, or know." So, like a fool, or a lover—not a jot wiser for all his sufferings, he stood at the door, listened, and finding it ajar, and all silent, save for the quiet breathing of one of its inmates, and the turning of leaves of the book she was reading by the other, ventured to look in. The maid had her back to him, and was reading; Netta sat in a chair by the fire, fast asleep, with her girlish figure relaxed, her rose-mouth parted, her little white teeth gleaming in the firelight, the long, brown lashes lying serenely on her fair cheek—just as fair, though a little less round than it used to be. Awake, she was somewhat altered; but asleep, expressionless, except for the peculiar innocence of slumber, she seemed almost as much a child as ever. Mr. George gazed, and gazed silently with bitter yearnings, feeling like a ghost haunting the partaker of its past joys, then, hearing a sound, turned away, and fled to his own room. Next day passed in the same manner, the weather continuing too stormy; Mrs. Brydone too much exhausted for her to be sent ashore in either of the boats, even could a crew have been procured.

In the evening, the temptation which appeared so harmless, again proved too strong for Mr. George, and he repeated his timid and secret watch. This time, however, the door-handle creaked under his trembling hand, and Mrs. Barker, glancing up quickly, and seeing indistinctly his muffled face, and then his figure taking hasty flight down the passage, returned, and excitedly recounted the fact to her mistress, throwing out dark suggestions of a desire on the part of the mysterious visitor to "murder them in their beds."

"What was he like, Barker?" cried Netta, vehemently. "Fair, with blue eyes?"

"Well, I don't know, 'm," replied Barker, crossly; "I know as he looked very sinister."

"Oh, nonsense!" said her mistress, accustomed to this worthy person's far-fetched alarms. "Just ask one of the others—from yourself, Barker—whether the third man has fair hair—*very* fair?" added Netta, with a silly, lingering tenderness of cadence.

Mrs. Barker, however, injured at her want of sympathy, instead of transacting the errand with due discretion, captured the luckless Jim, brought him into the very presence of her mistress, and then saying, "I thought you'd like best to ask the young man the question yourself, ma'am," left the room grimly.

Natural reticence and timidity prompted Netta to make some frivolous inquiry, and dismiss him; but something stronger conquered, and besides, the whole scene and position were so strange, it seemed easy to throw aside conventionalities. So she plunged straightway into the subject, and said, with her eye on the shuffling Jim: "There is another keeper whom I have not seen in the light-house, isn't there?"

"Yes, 'm," replied he, reluctantly, and making a movement to retreat.

"His name is Mr. George?" continued Netta, in a sweet, coaxing voice. "Now, I had a friend once of that name, and I am quite anxious to know if this can be he. So I shall be *so* much obliged if you can tell me. Has he fair hair?"

Jim was posed; concluded hastily that if truth were against Mr. George's wishes, lies must be in his favor, and answered boldly,

"No, 'm; black."

"His face is covered with a handkerchief," said Mrs. Brydone, remembering Barker's account, and instinctively doubtful of Jim's veracity.

"Oh, no, 'm, it ain't," said he, glibly, still on the same principle; "not it."

"He has a very low voice; I heard him speaking this morning in the passage."

"Low? Why, you can hear him a'most all over the place!" exclaimed Jim, in apparent astonishment. "Can't have been Mr. George as you heard."

"Then there's some one else here, besides," said Netta positively.

Jim shook his head solemnly.

"Then it *was* him."

"Might have been me, 'm," suggested Jim, doubtful if he were not taking a liberty in assuming the identity of Mr. George.

Mrs. Brydone dismissed him in despair; but, in spite of his answers, her instinct of suspicion grew unendurable, and at length yielding to it (like a sensible woman,) instead of reasoning herself out of it (like a sensible man,) she set her wits to work, and formed a little plan.

When Mr. George, after keeping a long watch, awoke late next morning, his first thought was of *Jack*. He went to the dog's bed, and called him. No answer. He put his hand fondly on the great brown paw that lay stiffly stretched out, guarding one of his own gloves, which he had given the poor animal to keep him quiet. Alas! that faithful paw was cold; those soft, adoring, golden-brown eyes glazed and sunk; those alert, curly ears fallen, never to rise again, even at the sound of the voice they had worshipped. *Jack* was dead.

Mr. George fell back against the wall, and stood leaning there, looking at his lost friend for a long time; from the quiet body to the gray, dull little square of sky beyond the window, over whose ragged cloud-drifts night was slowly closing; and thence round the four blank walls of his desolate abode. "*Jack* is *dead*," he said aloud—trying to realize it—"dead! *Jack* loved me. I have *nothing* on earth now." Then he took the sad, stiff body on his knees—a position rarely allowed, greatly coveted by *Jack* when alive—and sitting down by the fading red embers in the tiny fireplace, hid his face on that brown, curly coat. *Jack* was gone away forever—faithful, loving, generous *Jack!* Soon, even his poor cold clay must be flung away into the bright green billows he loved to breast and conquer living. *Jack* was dead.

Night fell, heavily and sadly, with neither moon nor stars; the men's voices came dimly from the watch-room, where they laughed and talked; Mrs. Barker, in her mistress's room, snored audibly over an old-fashioned novel belonging to Adam. Mr. George's wearied head fell lower and lower, and sleep came mercifully, and numbed his aching heart.

But one person was awake, and thinking of him. Netta's slender figure came stealing, with soft, light step and trembling heart, along the passage to his door. And now she had reached it, she paused, listened to her own heart-throbs, felt the blood rush to her cheek, and asked herself what bold thing she was doing—she, Ralph Brydone's widow! Yet now she was so near, it seemed a pity not to know at least the grounds of her improbable fancy, if it had any—which was not likely, of course!

She entered gently. Dark shadows were over the room; but a dim remainder of light flickered round the fireplace, on a man's figure, despairingly bowed over a dog's dead body stretched stiffly across his knees; and a sigh broke the silence, long and hopeless, the voice of a heart that, after long passion, had bled itself dry. What was there familiar in that sad sound—that figure? Was it the flickering light of the dying fire, or the real brightness of fair shining hair? Tears rushed into Netta's eyes, and she stole swiftly, silently round, dropped on her knees before the sleeper, looked up in his face, and saw—all! The handkerchief had fallen off; the careful disguise of so many years had, in a moment—the moment when it was most needed—failed. Scarred cheek and temple, broken nose, change and disfigurement, were all plainly revealed. But it mattered little. Two lips, soft and warm, pressed on Mr. George's cold cheek, made him quite sure he must be dreaming; and, with a sad habit he had acquired, he tried to awake, that the bitter disappointment of waking might be over. But, strange! only more and more kisses followed, and his startled eyes, opened widely, wildly, met two tender, wet, blissful ones looking down; his hand, put up frantically to feel for his disguise, was fondly captured; his lips, beginning to utter a despairing remonstrance, were struck dumb by the touch of a soft brown curl; the cloud of his bitter doubts was driven away by the sunshine of a smile; and the horror he had morbidly dreaded all these years never came to pass at all; for he awoke with his head on Netta's heart.

Do you think arms and eyes and lips let him go till he was convinced by sweet, illogical, playful reasonings; taught, by floods of fond tears, to be penitent for his morbid fears; or that that black handkerchief, like the black pall which had fallen on his life, was ever reassumed? No; Miss Netta flung it "and *everything*," as she said, into the fire, with great scorn, that very evening; and when she had cried a little over poor *Jack*, and, after her old fashion, argued with the greatest warmth (though there was not a soul to oppose her) that animals *certainly* had souls, and would consequently have a paradise, &c., she put her hands with tender coquetry on Tempest's shoulders and inquired: "Do you remember the questions I used to ask you—about whether you liked all sorts of things?"

"Perfectly, my darling."

"Well, I've got *one* left to ask. Now listen, sir."

Tempest acquiesced, but looked at her with a certain nervous apprehension. He could hardly believe yet in the possibility of his happiness.

But the question came, and if that did not convince him, especially when uttered with such sparkling, tearful eyes, tremulous lips, and blushing cheeks—with such a look of fond and proud affection—I don't know what could: "Would you like—to marry *me?*"

Dear reader, can you put yourself in his place, and guess his answer?

THE CHRISTMAS ANTHEM.

BY J. A. PHILLIPS.

It was Christmas Eve, and there was a bustle of preparation for the morrow pervading the little village of Groschen, which gave an appearance of peculiar animation to that usually quiet and staid little place.

In the Main street the shops were all aglow with light, and gay parties were hurrying about from shop to shop, some providing for to-morrow's dinner, others engaged in searching for some suitable gift for some friend or relation, and some just idly strolling about to see what their neighbors were doing.

Almost at the head of the Main street, standing back some twenty or thirty yards from the road, in the middle of a grass-plot, which was now covered deep with snow, stood the village church. It was a plain unpretentious edifice of stone, with a steep roof, and no tower, belfry or other ornament to it. The windows were narrow and of common glass—even the oval over the altar was of the same material. Everything about the place was rigidly plain, and there was scarcely any attempt at ornamentation. The pulpit and reading-desk were of maple, but simply, almost austerely, made, and the altar rails were not even turned, but cut uncompromisingly square.

The only spot which appeared to have partially escaped the pervading plainness was the place set apart for the choir, and which boasted nearly all the decoration there was. It stood on the left of the aisle, against the wall, not facing the pulpit but at right angles with it, and was raised on a platform about two feet high; this platform projected on three sides beyond the wooden railing, and afforded room for a good wide seat, and here strangers were generally accommodated, as the church was small and all the seats taken.

There was a small harmonium in the choir, and the railings were neatly turned and the broad seat in front comfortably cushioned, which gave the "music gallery," as it was ostentatiously called, a greater air of finish and completeness than any other portion of the church.

The little church was busy and gay this Christmas Eve, like all the rest of Groschen, for the members of the choir had met to practice the Christmas music for the last time, and also to decorate the edifice as far as possible with evergreens.

The practising was over, and the minister's wife, who acted as—what shall I say, organist?—sat at the harmonium trying over softly a new ambitious "voluntary" with which she intended to "play the congregation out" on the next day.

Groups of girls were busying themselves in various parts of the church, twining wreaths around the iron brackets which supported the oil lamps, sticking sprigs of green into the backs of the seats, trying to coax some garlands to hang gracefully about the plain, angular reading-desk, and otherwise endeavoring to beautify the place and give it an appearance of more life and cheerfulness than it usually possessed.

Of course there were various young men helping the young ladies—there would be no fun in decorating a church if it were not for the assistance the young men afford the young ladies—and the greater number of them were gathered in the body of the church chatting gayly, and ornamenting the backs of the seats. A party of three, one lady, two gentlemen, were, with the aid of a ladder, trying to nail to the wall, over the altar, some letters made out of evergreen, which were to read:

"Peace on earth, good-will toward men."

Seated in front of the altar rails was a young girl of about twenty, engaged in twisting some wreaths of evergreen around the square rails; she worked in a dull, uninterested way as if she took but little pleasure in her task, and at length rested her head on the top of the rail, and the tears started to her eyes and silently trickled down her cheeks. She had sat for several minutes this way with her face buried in her hands, when a hurried step advanced along the chancel, and a young man rapidly approaching laid his hand on her shoulder and said, gayly: "Why, Jessie, are you playing hide-and-seek? I've been looking for you everywhere;" then as she looked up at him, and he saw she had been crying, he added in a lower and more tender tone: "Why, you have been crying; what is the matter?"

"Is that you, Bill?" said the girl glancing up at him; "there is nothing the matter with me, only a fit of the blues at the thought of how soon I must leave Groschen."

"Leave Groschen!"

"Yes, Bill," she rejoined sadly, rising and turning away from the altar rail, "leave Groschen, perhaps never to return."

She said no more, but walked slowly along the chancel to the choir and seated herself on the broad seat in front of it. Her companion followed and silently seated himself by her side. The clergyman's wife had finished her "voluntary," and this part of the church was quite deserted. They sat silent for a few moments, and then Bill asked:

"What do you mean by leaving Groschen, Jessie? Is it a joke?"

"If it was it would be a very *sad one*, Bill, but it is only too true. I leave the day after to-morrow."

"But what does it mean?"

"It means, Bill, that sad trouble has come on us, and all Groschen will know it before the year is out. Father is ruined, and the farm will have to be sold, and God only knows whether there will be enough left to keep father and mother in their old days. As for me, I must work for my living. I have got a situation as governess in a family in Montreal, and I am to go to them the day after to-morrow."

"Sell Brookside—Squire Barton ruined—you going away! I can't understand it," said Bill, in a puzzled sort of way.

"It is only too true. You see, it happened this way: Two years ago father went security for an old schoolmate in Quebec who was entering on some speculation. Mother opposed it, but father had great confidence in his friend and went security for him. Well, the speculation failed, and father had to pay a large sum of money, so large that he didn't have enough, and so the farm had to be mortgaged for $2,000. It was done very quietly in Montreal, and no one here knew anything about it. The mortgage was to run for several years, but you know how everything has gone against father this year, the crops being poor, the stock dying, and then that dreadful fire which destroyed the barn and all it contained. It seemed as if everything was against father, and so he could not pay the interest on the mortgage, and the lawyers did something or other about it, and the farm is to be sold. Of course, there will be something left, for Brookside is worth more than $2,000; but I am afraid it will scarcely be enough to keep father and mother."

Mr. William Hayes, who has hitherto been styled only "Bill," sat in deep thought for several minutes; then he said—

"Is there no one, Jessie, that your father could apply to for help, no friend, no relative?"

"No," she said, shaking her head sadly, "no one; he has few friends, none who could help him, and as for relatives, I don't think he has one in the world. I never heard of but one, Uncle Robert, and he had a terrible quarrel with father years before I was born, before father was married, in fact, and he went way and died in Australia. This was before father came to Groschen to live."

"It's awful hard," said Mr. Hayes, scratching his head meditatively, as if trying to dig out an idea, "awful hard. But, I say," he suddenly added with great energy, "if you go away, who is to lead the choir?"

"Nellie Chadworth, I suppose. I shall sing my last anthem to-morrow," she added, sadly. "I shall take away many pleasant memories of the choir and often think of the old church, and the happy hours I have spent in it, when I am far away."

The tears started to her eyes again, and she turned aside to hide her emotion.

Mr. William Hayes, bachelor, aged twenty-four, good-looking and in good physical health, sat drumming with his heels against the seat, firmly believing he was the most miserable man in existence. He had grown up from boyhood with Jessie Barton, and his love for her had become part of his very life. There was no formal engagement, no vows of love had ever passed between them, but every one looked upon it as a settled thing that Bill Hayes was to marry Jessie Barton sometime—when his father died, most people said. Mr. Hayes sat drumming with his heels, and bitterly thought of what he was and what was his position. Now was the time when he ought to tell her of his love and offer to guard and protect her; but how was he to do it! What was he? Nothing! Simply a hanger-on upon his father; to be sure, he was book-keeper in his father's store in the village, and got the liberal pay of $6 a week and his board and lodging. He could live very well as a bachelor in a quiet country village like Groschen, but it would never support a wife and prospective family. Certainly, his father was rich, the richest man by far in Groschen, and he was his only child; but Bill knew his father well, a hard, stern, cold, grasping man, and he knew he would never consent to his marrying a poor girl; and if he offended him by disobedience, Bill would not give much for his chances when the will came to be read, for he knew his father well enough to know that he would carry his enmity beyond the grave.

And so Mr. Hayes sat and drummed away, thinking what a fool he was not to have gone to California four years ago, when his Cousin Tom Reeves went. Tom had made a little fortune in that time, and wrote home glowing accounts of his success. While Mr. Hayes drummed away and mentally called himself any quantity of fools, Jessie still sat with her head averted and the tears silently coursing down her cheeks. It is a dangerous position for a man madly in love to find himself seated by the object of his affection and to see her in tears. Mr. Hayes resisted as long as possible, but his love was too strong for his determination, and suddenly, he scarce knew how, he found his arm around Jessie's waist, and as he drew her to him he whispered passionately,

"Jessie, darling, I know I am a great fool; I know I am not worthy of you; but I love you—"

"There, there, let us go!" exclaimed Jessie, rising suddenly with glowing cheeks; "they are putting out the lights, and we shall be locked in."

So saying, she walked down the aisle followed by Mr. Hayes, who felt more convinced than ever that he was a fool.

* * * * *

"It is just what Christmas ought to be." That was what Farmer Bullrush said next morning, and Farmer Bullrush was an authority on the weather for ten miles around Groschen, and certainly ought to know what he was talking about. Certain it is that it was a clear, cold, bright day, with the thermometer about fifteen degrees below freezing, and just sun enough to make a good sharp walk pleasant. Everybody and everything looked gay and bright in the sunshine; and I rather lean to Farmer Bullrush's opinion that it was "just what Christmas ought to be."

The bell of the little church had not ceased ringing for the very good and sufficient reason that it had never begun; in fact, there was no bell at all, but the congregation had assembled in full force and the building was crowded to its utmost capacity.

Jessie sat in her accustomed place as leader of the choir: and the paleness of her countenance and the half mournful manner in which she looked about the church from time to time, as if taking leave of some familiar object, showed how much she felt and grieved at the fact that she sat in her accustomed place for perhaps the last time.

The service was pretty well advanced when a stranger entered the church. He did not seem at first as if he intended to enter; for after he put his head in he withdrew it again, and then muttering, "I can rest here as well as anywhere else," he advanced a little way up the aisle. In a moment the sexton saw him, and pouncing on him, carried him off in triumph to the strangers' seat, and duly seated him in the corner next to Jessie, obsequiously handed him a book, which the man took mechanically and opened, without looking to see to what part of the service he had turned.

He was a curious-looking man, this stranger, old, with scanty white locks and the crows' feet deep around his eyes. Yet it did not seem to be age alone which had blanched his hair and lined his face, for his form was erect and strong, and the bright flash of his eye told of health and vigor yet. He looked rather like a man whose hair had been prematurely whitened by care and sorrow than one who was far on in the vale of years.

He looked about him from time to time, and a half smile curled his lips as the solemn words of the Litany fell upon his ear, and he muttered to himself, "All nonsense; all nonsense."

Suddenly there was a pause; the congregation rose from their knees, and the clergyman gave out the anthem. It was not exactly an anthem, it was one of the hymns for Christmas day, but it had been carefully practised for weeks and arranged so that the soprano should sing one verse, and the tenor the next, and "everbody" join in the chorus, and great things were expected of it—in fact it was to be the feature of the service.

The wheezy little harmonium sighed out the overture, there was a slight pause, the rustling of dress as the congregation rose, and then a clear, sweet, full, young voice, pure and musical as the song of a bird, burst forth in the full tide of melody with the glorious old Christmas hymn,

"Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."

Gradually the full, round voice rose to the majestic melody of the hymn, and the whole building seemed to echo again and again with the glad tidings that Christ was born to save sinners.

When the full tide of song first fell upon his ear the old man turned and looked long and earnestly at the fair singer. Jessie Barton was not what would be called a pretty girl, her features were not regular, but her complexion was fair, and her face pure and good, and as she stood now, her bright blue eyes sparkling with animation, her fair hair streaming unbound over her shoulders, her cheeks slightly flushed, and her whole soul seemingly absorbed in singing her Creator's praise, she looked almost beautiful.

The old man put his hand to his ear and sat quietly listening, and long after that he kept repeating to himself:

"Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled,"

and then he would look over the altar and read,

"Peace on earth, good will toward men,"

and he would shake his head and mutter, "I can't understand it, it used to be all hell-fire and damnation, but it's all changed now; I should like to ask her about it," and he turned and looked again at the calm, pure face beside him.

The old man's attention never wandered from the service again, and he listened reverently to the sermon, as if he was trying to reconcile it in his mind with something he had heard before.

It wasn't a brilliant sermon; it was simply a recount of the plan of salvation and a brief history of the nativity of the Saviour; but the preacher was earnest and impressive, and carried a conviction of the Creator's love and tenderness home to the hearts of his hearers. And the old man listened with his hand to his ear, and still he murmured, "I should like to ask her if it is true."

The service was over and the congregation had all dispersed, Jessie was almost the last person to leave the church, for she had lingered to say good-bye to her friends, and after that was busied in packing up her music to take home with her for the last time.

As she passed out of the door, after shaking hands with the sexton and bidding him good-bye, a man who had evidently been waiting for her came up quietly and walked by her side. She looked up and saw it was the old man who had sat by her in the church. He did not look like a beggar; he was well dressed, and seemed warm and comfortable; his clothes, though not exactly new, were of good quality and in excellent preservation; and he walked erect, with his head up, and an elastic, independent stride like a man who owed the world nothing and asked no favors of it. He walked on for a few yards in silence, and then said, abruptly:

"Do you believe it?"

"Believe what?" asked Jessie; she was surprised, but not the least frightened at the old man's conduct, for it was broad daylight and she was within a hundred yards of her father's house, and some of the congregation were not a dozen yards ahead of her.

"What you were singing just now.

"'Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconcil'd,'

and what he was preaching about Christ dying to save sinners—do you believe it?"

"Do I believe the story of the Saviour offering himself a sacrifice for our sins? Of course I do! Don't you?"

"I don't know! it seems so strange; I haven't been in a church nigh on thirty years, and then they used to preach about hell-fire and damnation; it all seems so strange." He walked on quietly by her side for some time without saying any more, until Jessie stopped before a comfortable looking farm-house, then he asked—

"Would you mind talking it over with an old man?" he asked.

Jessie hesitated, and then said—

"You had better talk to the minister, sir, he is so much wiser, and knows so much better than me."

"No; it was your voice roused me, not his: I'd rather talk to you."

"Jessie," said her mother, coming to the door, "why don't you come in—dinner's waiting on the table?"

Jessie looked from the old man to her mother and seemed in doubt what to do—at last she asked the old man to "wait a minute," and going to her mother said—

"Mother, here is an old gentleman who was at church, and he walked home with me and asked me some strange questions, and he says he wants to talk with me—what shall I do?"

"Well, child," she said, "you know your father's notions about Christmas—he wouldn't let a dog go from the gate on Christmas day; ask the gentleman in to dinner—the roast beef is small, but it will be enough."

Jessie did as she was bid, and after a little remonstrance on the part of the old gentleman, who at first insisted on going to the inn, allowed himself to be persuaded, and followed Jessie into the house.

"Father, this gentleman is a stranger in the village, and I've asked him to take dinner with us."

"And you did right, Jessie," said Mr. Barton, rising and advancing toward the stranger and cordially extending his hand. "You're heartily welcome, sir; our fare is plain, but what there is we are pleased to have you with us to share. I never allow any stranger to pass my door on Christmas day; if there is little else to offer there's a hearty welcome, and that's something. Come right in, dinner is just ready."

Mr. Barton was a hale, hearty specimen of a farmer, tall, broad-chested, bronzed with exposure, his hand hard with honest labor, and the frost of fifty winters just showing itself in his iron-gray hair, he stood the very impersonation of that noblest work of God, an honest man.

The dinner passed off merrily, the old gentleman developed a fund of wit which no one expected from him. He had travelled in almost every part of the world, had been whaling in the Arctic Seas and had hunted tigers in the heart of India. He had seen many strange sights and was full of humorous anecdotes with which he kept his audience fully amused.

After dinner they went into the parlor, and while Mr. Barton took his usual nap, Jessie opened the piano and sung some of her favorite hymns for the old man.

"Thank you, my dear," he said, when she had finished, "and now I want to ask you a question; you have treated an old man and a stranger very kindly and he does not even know who to thank; what is your name?"

"Jessie Barton."

"Barton, Barton!" he exclaimed in some surprise, "any relation to the Bartons who used to live in Sherbrooke?"

"The same family, father moved here about fifteen years ago."

The old man bowed his head in his hands for a minute and said softly to himself, "I believe it now.

"Peace on earth, good-will toward men."

Just then the farmer stirred in his sleep, and waking with a sudden snort looked about him and tried very hard to pretend he had never been asleep at all.

The old man rose and crossing to him said very solemnly—

"Alfred Barton, do you remember thirty years ago quarrelling with your brother in the old homestead in Sherbrooke?"

"Aye, aye, Bob was always a hasty lad, but he had a good heart."

"Do you remember how he cursed you, and swore he would never break bread with you, or recognize you as his brother again?"

"Aye, aye, but I know he was sorry for it afterward, and if he had lived I believe he would have come back years ago and told me so."

"He does live, he has come back, he is sorry for it," exclaimed the old gentleman in excited tones. "Good God, Alfred, is it possible we have both changed so much in thirty years we cannot recognize each other?"

The two men looked into each other's faces for nearly a minute, then their hands met with a hearty grip and two words escaped them—

"Robert!"

"Alfred!"

And so the quarrel of thirty years ago was made up.

After awhile the farmer spoke, still holding his brother's hand—

"Robert, lad, you've come back at a bad time, the farm is about to be sold, and there will not be much left; but much or little we'll share it together, lad, for so I know the father would have wished, altho' he said nothing about it in the will, thinking you were dead."

"And so you'll share with me," said the old man, a tear beginning to creep into the corner of his eye.

"Aye, lad, it's not much, but there's a hearty welcome."

"And I'll share with you," said the old man, bringing his hand down with a jolly smack into the farmer's right hand which he had seized with his own left hand and turned palm upward all ready to be smacked; "I'll share with you, and you won't get the worst of the bargain, for," and he drew himself up proudly, "the firm of Robert Barton & Co., Bankers, San Francisco, is good for a million any time and plenty of small change left to pay little bills. Yes," he continued after a pause, "I'm a rich man, Alfred, but I stand alone in the world; of a wife, five sons and two daughters, not one is left to me, and I stand like a blasted pine-tree withering up all alone. One by one death has stolen my darlings away, and now, when I am getting old, and want to spend the rest of my days in peace and quiet, I have no home to spend them in. Let me end my days with you, Alfred, I have done enough for fortune, let me do something for happiness."

My story is as good as finished; the farm wasn't sold, and Jessie did not go as a governess to Montreal. Mr. Hayes somehow found courage to finish that little speech he commenced in church and Jessie did not interrupt him, and when his father found that he was going to marry a great heiress instead of a penniless girl, he gave him a handsome house and made over the business to him.

There is a little "Bill," and a little "Jessie," and a little "Bob" now, and Jessie looks quite matronly altho' she still leads the choir; and the old man sits in the strangers' seat—he will take no other—and listens to her pure voice, and says that he never began to feel what true happiness might mean until he heard that Christmas Anthem—

"Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ "Kiss Quadrille" is introduced in Phœnixville, Chester county. It's a success.

☞ The Kansas City stage claims a girl that once jilted Stanley.

☞ A Western pie-eater sat sixteen pies in seventeen minutes.

☞ The new style of bonnet is a cross between a locomotive smoke-stack and a custard-pie.

☞ A man stole a ride on the top of an express car from New Haven to Hartford, the other night. When he gets a new pair of ears perhaps he will try it again.

☞ A compositor out West the other day turned out an account of a wedding headed, "Making of Sauer Krant," when it should have been "Marriage of Gen. Kauts." When the editor saw the article he burst a patent sweat-guage.

☞ A new paper in Texas starts out with the announcement that "in religion we are conservative, and we intend to adhere to the cash system."

☞ Honest farmers in Iowa fill ducks with water and let them freeze before taking them to market.

☞ A widow in Dorchester, Massachusetts, has been three times married. Her first husband was Robb, the second Robbins and the third Robinson. The same doorplate has served the whole three, and the question now is, what extended name can be procured to fill out the remaining space on it.

☞ An unselfish suicide at Atchison, Kansas, left the autographic injunction, "Don't make any fuss over me, but chuck me into a hole."

☞ I now pronounce you man and—hand over the ten dollars before I go any further," is a way Connecticut clergymen have of securing their fee.

☞ They attempted to kill a book agent in Omaha last week. He was robbed, thrown into the river, knocked off the cars, pitched from a high bridge into the river again, but in two hours after came round with a new illustrated edition of the Bible, and tried to get the subscription of the leader of the attacking party.

☞ The following letter, *verbatim et literatim*, was received by an undertaker, recently, from an afflicted widower; "Sur—my Wief is ded and Wonts to be berried tomorrow At woner klok. U nose wair to dig the hole—by the side of my two Other wiafs—Let it be deep!"

☞ A Stonington, (Connecticut) man stopped his paper and took out his "one square ad." because the little black-and-tan-dog of the editor nipped a pet cat in the bud, by chewing its tail off. Let Congress step in now and decide whether a newspaper man has any rights.

☞ A young woman in western New York has declined an offer from a very wealthy suitor named Hussey, saying that she won't be called a Hussey for the best man in creation.

☞ A Scranton editor received a gold pen for a Christmas present; but he doesn't use it. He says it is not half so handy as his old pair of scissors in getting up editorials.

☞ A brilliant Danburyan did not clean the snow from his sidewalk. He pinched his wife until she screamed, and his neighbors trod down the snow for him.

☞ A short time ago a man entered a smoking car on a Pennsylvania railroad with a can of nitro-glycerine and the conductor made him take it into the baggage car. The tender solicitude with which trunks were handled on that car for some time, brought tears to the eyes of a veteran baggage-smasher.

☞ The editor of the Irish American Leader thus encourages one of his poetical contributors: "Our waste basket for original poetry has for the fourth time within two months been emptied of its contents. Your elegant contribution finds a place therein, and is now reclining gracefully in its capacious depths."

☞ Benevolent St. Louis man secured the Christmas benedictions of the newsboys by giving each a new cap. The happy recipients rushed to a pawnshop and "spouted" the new head-gear for money to buy matinee tickets.

☞ St. Louis sends this envenomed dart into the breast of a sister city: "Beecher charges $1,500 to lecture in Chicago; $500 elsewhere. The extra $1,000 is to compensate for the loss of self-respect."

☞ The editor of a Wyandotte (Kansas) paper asks his subscribers to overlook the fact that he will "not be able to get out any paper that week," owing to the fact that he "momentarily expects a charming young lady, who is going to take him out a sleigh-riding."

☞ A man in Indiana County, Pa., won a wager of $7 by walking two miles barefoot through the snow. He will wear boots three sizes larger in future.

☞ Naples has raised three thousand soldiers to hunt down seven brigands, but the brigands are hunting the soldiers.

☞ They use mules for pulling the Cleveland street-cars, and the drivers are not allowed to swear while on duty. They are given a full day each week, however, to go to the woods and let out the confined essence.

☞ A correspondent writes to the Country Gentleman, and wants to know how to cure his mare of excessive nervousness. He says: "She appears lonesum like when alone, and pines for the society of other horses, and gits the histeries when any vehikle or man comes trotting by quickly."

☞ A man in Oregon, on the evening of the recent earthquake, had informed his wife that he had an important business appointment which he was reluctantly obliged to keep. When the shock came he rushed home with a billiard cue in his hand, which he had forgotten to replace; and now his wife won't hear of any business appointments after 8 o'clock, P. M.

☞ Marshfield, Mo., has a poet "lariat," who, when he is not wooing the muse, whitewashes and digs wells for a living.

☞ A young man living in Troy sent his betrothed a piano for a holiday present, paying for it with a check which went to protest on its presentation, and the piano was reclaimed by the maker before the young lady had a chance to try it.

☞ Pittsburg gets more smoky every year; and now the city barbers sand-paper the heads of bald-headed customers, so that their hairless craniums will not look like an over-done rusk biscuit when at society gatherings.

☞ The St. Louis library for the county jail has been started with thirty volumes of Tupper.

☞ A Vermont school-teacher insisted that "yellow" was "yallor," and he flogged a pupil almost to death to convince him of it.

☞ A Louisville young man was rather nervous at his marriage ceremony, and handed the minister his washerwoman's bill instead of the license.

☞ A western paper says that a young man was recently shot, "probably by a gun or a pistol." It does not appear unlikely.

☞ A Hartford subscriber writes that he is just recovering from the small-pox, and will be on in a few days to renew his subscription. We hope he won't mind a little thing like that. We will send the paper, and wait for the money. We will wait cheerfully. We are not of that avaricious kind of people who will grab for money as if for very life. We despise such things. There's no earthly reason for his coming on; we will wait.—*Danbury News.*

☞ Nilsson will exchange notes with Americans again before the year expires. Musical notes for greenbacks, four of the latter per capita.

☞ Some fathers are too hard-hearted for anything. A man scolded his twelve-year-old son fully five minutes the other day because the child used his (the father's) best Sunday razor to open oysters with. We don't see how the razor could hurt the oysters, anyhow.

☞ It is said that a little son of a minister in this city a few weeks ago interrupted the sermon of his father by asking, "Pa, ain't you done putty soon?"

☞ The members of a new gymnasium in Harrisburg are practising with creditable zeal. One of the most persevering has limbered to an extent that permits him to go down two flights of stairs on his back teeth.

☞ Newark, N J., little children snowballed a lunatic. Lunatic drew a pistol and created a stampede.

☞ Girls at an Ohio college had to lie in bed all day to keep them from freezing—heating apparatus out of order.

☞ A lady in Danielsonville, Connecticut, has domesticated a butterfly. A butterfly is ornamental, but it hasn't that depth of affection and those social qualities which can be relied on in a cockroach when once his confidence has been gained.—*Boston Post.*

☞ Dr. Terry, Columbus, Georgia, gave the following wise testimony: "Saw deceased after he was shot; I don't know how long he lived afterward; I did not make any minute examination, for the reason I did not want you lawyers to prove I killed him with a probe."

HASTY WORDS.

A TALE ABOUT SPOONS.

When Fred Radcliffe, like the sensible young man he was, got married, he did not drop his best bachelor acquaintances. Among those whose friendship he valued, and who became a familiar visitor at his house, was Frank Walton, whom he had known from boyhood, had been to school with, and esteemed, as is common with young men who start together in the world on opposite courses. There was another disparity, however, between them—everything seemed to prosper with Fred Radcliffe, who had enlisted in the ranks of commerce—everything seemed to go wrong with Frank Walton, who had applied himself to literature and the law. Hanging on the skirts of both, the world charitably (?) said, he succeeded with neither, just as a young man of uncertain mind flirts with two sisters, and is eventually scornfully discarded by both. The judgment pronounced by those who knew them was that Frank Walton was poor because he was indolent, and Fred Radcliffe was successful because he was energetic. Little did any of them imagine that Frank had a secret which pressed heavily on his finely-attuned mind.

It was natural therefore, that by comparison with her sanguine, bustling husband, Frank Walton held rather a low place in the estimation of Mrs. Fred Radcliffe. Not that she was apt to be censorious; she was too active and cheerful to be much given to criticism, but filled with the importance of her new position, she allowed herself no time to think before forming opinions or uttering them. Somewhat giddy with happiness, she was thoughtless, and it was just that womanly weakness that caused her to be the heroine of this little story.

It was breakfast time on a fine spring morning. Frank often strolled up to his friend's cottage in Kentish Town, as much for the walk from his solitary chambers as anything else. Fred had gone to the city, and Frank lingered over the newspaper, the pretty Mrs. Fred regarding him with no very amiable expression, for the word "dawdler" was trembling on her scarlet lips. In truth, Mrs. Fred was all impatient to be about her household duties, and seeing that "things were set to rights for the day." At length, Frank, roused up by the rattling of cups and saucers, languidly laid aside the paper and prepared to take his departure. His action was so slow that Mrs. Fred was still further irritated—the young wife and housekeeper rose up strong within her; and as Frank stood by the street door, which the servant girl held open for him, he distinctly heard Mrs. Fred cry out, in no silvery voice, "Betty, make haste, and count the spoons." Had he not been looking out into the roadway he would have seen a flush red as a rose in the girl's face, for she put her special interpretation on her mistress's command. As it was, he quietly bade her good-morning, and passed on his way meditatively.

"What could she have meant?" he thought. "Surely she cannot think me capable of—pshaw! the idea is too absurd. Some petulance of her woman's nature, I should imagine. Still, she might have meant something; perhaps I am not a welcome guest—too dull at the best of times for her brightness, and maybe I come too often. I must think over it."

And he did think over it seriously, for long before he had arrived at the Temple he he had registered a solemn vow to be revenged.

"I will teach her a lesson," he said to himself. "I cannot humiliate myself, or soundhearted Fred, by asking for an explanation; but I can and will teach her a lesson in a quiet sort of way. Words—even as words, however hastily spoken—are no excuse for a breach of hospitality."

In an hour afterward he had decided what to do, and had dismissed the affair from his mind, but it was weeks before he again paid a visit to the cottage in Kentish Town. Fred missed him much, and often wondered to his wife why he did not drop in as usual.

"Better engaged!" was the careless reply, but with a ring of thankfulness in its tone.

"I must look him up," exclaimed her husband. "The poor fellow is moping himself to death in those dismal chambers—very likely writing another book. A change now and then will be good for him."

And "look him up" Fred did, and to a purpose, for Frank shortly after became a constant caller, and apparently on the old footing; Mrs. Fred, who had other claims on her anxiety, speedily falling into the habit of tolerating him, even expecting him as one who had a right to be expected.

The months rolled quietly on, and a great event occurred in the cottage in Kentish Town.

It was Christmas time, and a child had been born to the youthful couple—a boy, the very image of his father, said congratulatory female relations; though Betty, the servant, asserted that he "favored a good deal after his mother."

Of course there was a christening, and Mr. Frank Walton was the godfather, an office which he accepted with an alacrity which as much surprised as gratified the happy Fred.

At the feast Frank produced his present, which consisted of half a dozen of silver teaspoons, with the initials of the newly-baptized infant duly engraved on the handle.

"It is a whim of mine," exclaimed the spiritual father, apologetically. "You know the old adage about being born with a silver spoon in the mouth; and as that luck was never mine, I don't see why little Frank should not have it."

"And a pretty whim it is," said the gratified mother.

"If Master Frank has to use all these spoons," added the father, "I shall have to work a good deal harder than I do."

And so, amid good wishes and numerous healths, the christening passed off merrily enough.

In due time Mrs. Fred presented her lord with another pledge of their affection—this time a girl—and again Frank stood sponsor, repeating the gift of another half-dozen of silver spoons. Mrs. Fred did open her eyes a little, but Frank quietly shut them up by quoting another old adage about the goose and the gander.

Time sped on, and every fifteen months or so another little Radcliffe came into the world, to be shadowed by its persistent godfather with the same inevitable number of silver spoons; so, at the end of about a dozen years, Mrs. Fred had as many silver teaspoons as would have sufficed for the largest and genteelest of girls' boarding-schools. Of course, they were all carefully packed away, for Mr. Fred was growing rich, and his wife had no occasion to make use of the plate intended for their children. Frequently did she ponder over the singularity of the gift, and as frequently only arrive at the same conclusion—that Mr. Frank Walton was eccentric, and it was fortunate his peculiarity took such a harmless turn. Her husband thought his friend singular, to say the least of it, and sometimes fancied that the present of a nice goblet might have agreeably varied the benevolence of his guardianship. But, no: Frank would stick to spoons. He alleged that he had a passion for spoons, being a bit of a "spooney" himself. In Fred's household he had acquired the *sobriquet* of "Spoons," at which he chuckled immensely, and would express a wish that on his tombstone there should be carved the effigy of the biggest of spoons—something less than a ladle, and not so small as a saltspoon—at which Fred would slyly observe that he hoped he should not be made executor to his will, as he would have some trouble to prove that he was of sound testamentary capacity.

"My will!" Frank would somewhat mournfully reply. "Don't fret about that; I carry the bulk of my possessions under my hat."

"But this spoon business—eh, Frank?"

"Will never be explained by me. Be content with the knowledge that it is a whim of mine," said Frank, somewhat hastily, as he caught the rather searching glance of Mrs. Fred fixed on his countenance.

Thenceforward the "spoon business," as matter for comment between the three, was tacitly dropped, until another "interesting event" revived it, and painfully for one of the parties. Mrs. Fred had again become a mother, and as that year Christmas Day was not on a Sunday, the now somewhat stout married pair resolved that they would hold the grand festival and the celebration of the "naming" of the baby on the same day. Of course, Frank was to be the godfather, for Mrs. Fred had now come to believe that he brought "luck" into the family with his "spoons," for all her progeny were thriving, and not one had been taken from her.

It was Christmas morning. Fred had gone out for a constitutional in the keen frosty air, and Mrs. Fred had given her final instructions to the cook, when Betty, now a buxom matron, who had come to "help," entered the room with a small parcel and a letter.

"Any particular orders about the beds, mum?" inquired Betty, lingering, for she had recognized the messenger as one who did "odd jobs" for Mr. Frank.

"I'll speak to you in a minute," said Mrs. Fred, opening the letter, which proved to be from Frank, announcing that illness would prevent his attendance, but that he could not allow the day to pass over without his usual trifling gift, which he begged to forward with his blessing for the addition to Mrs. Fred's blooming family.

"How fortunate!" exclaimed Mrs. Fred, as, undoing the parcel, six bright silver teaspoons rolled into her lap.

"Anything happened to Mr. Frank?" asked Betty, with the familiarity of an old and favorite servant.

"He is very ill and cannot come to the christening; but you see he has sent the spoons."

"Spoons!" echoed Betty, as she slowly backed herself out of the room.

"Spoons!" said Mrs. Fred, softly, to herself, as she held up one to the light, and read the monogram, "A. G. A." (Alfred George Adolphus.) "If I were at all inclined to be superstitious, I should say there was something very extraordinary in his persisting in sending spoons on these occasions. Why, these make the ninth lot, and six times nine are fifty-four. How singular!"

The number seemed to console Mrs. Fred, for all women like the precious metals, whether in plate or money, and she fell into a fit of musing, in which silver teaspoons and her children were inextricably blended. Betty, meanwhile, having adjourned to the kitchen, took up a position in a corner with her apron thrown over her head, to meditate in her fashion.

"Them spoons is dreadful!" she thought. "Why is it always spoons? It seems like a spell or a bit of witchcraft? To be sure, there is a fate in everything but what's in spoons, and real silver ones, too, I should like to know?"

Thus brooding, she heard a familiar sound—it was the click of silver—and then a small voice saying—

"Will you count the spoons, sir?"

"Count the spoons!" almost shrieked Betty, as, starting up, she rushed from the kitchen, and burst into Mrs. Fred's morning-room with a terrible clamor.

The ancient philosopher never shouted out "Eureka!" with greater volume than Betty shouted—

"I have got it at last—it's been on my mind for years! I can explain the mystery of the spoons."

"Oh, Betty, can you indeed?" said Mrs. Fred, eagerly.

"I can, missus. Don't you remember one morning some twelve years ago when Mr. Frank stayed reading the paper after master had gone out, which fretted you considerable, and as I was a-letting of him out at the door you cried out, 'Betty, have you counted the spoons?' He heard it—I am certain he did. So, like the soft-hearted gentleman he is, he said to hisself, 'Mrs. Fred, I won't demean myself by taking notice of the insinuation; but, depend upon it, before I die you shall have spoons enough to count.'"

Mrs. Fred turned very pale. Memory, the warder that sometimes sleeps at his post, was awakened, and in an instant she remembered that beautiful spring morning, when she, with almost girlish petulance, wishing to get rid of her husband's guest, lost her temper, and did utter the words which had been so misconstrued, as she imagined, by Frank Walton, whom for years she had regarded and esteemed as the best of friends, and the most tender-souled of gentlemen.

"You may go down, Betty—and, Betty, don't speak of this to any one. I did not mean it, and I am afraid, marrying so well, I was a good deal too much mistress of all blessings but that of a well-guarded tongue."

Betty did go down, and Mrs. Fred sat down to find relief in woman's refuge—a good cry. All that day her manner was very subdued, and the double events did not pass off quite so satisfactorily as Mr. Fred could have wished. Next morning, to the delight of her husband, Mrs. Fred proposed that they should pay a visit to Frank in the Temple.

"He must be very ill," she suggested, and that was enough.

In a couple of hours they were ascending the broad staircase of a block of buildings in that huge pile off Fleet street, in which there are as many hearts broken as fortunes made. Mr. Frank lived high in the world, the topmost story, and as Mrs. Fred drew her breath hard, for she was unused to such steep ascents, a great pity came over her for the struggling barrister.

Admitted by an aged and dingy laundress, they found Frank stretched on an old sofa, looking wretched, for a violent cold had fastened on his lungs.

Fred was shocked at the alteration in his friend's appearance, and insisted upon a physician being called in.

"Go for one," said his wife, and Fred descended the old staircase with the agility of a student of twenty-one.

When they were alone—for the laundress had gone out on her accustomed errands, and Frank had given his clerk a holiday—Mrs. Fred, with big tears starting in her still bright eyes, exclaimed, as she took the sick man pleadingly by the wan hand—

"Oh, Frank, can you, will you forgive me?"

"Forgive what?"

"That miserable remark about spoons one day. It had no reference to you—how could it? I was very irritable that wretched morning, and—and—I am now so very, very sorry."

A quiet, amused smile played on Frank's thin, white lips for a moment, and then, yielding to a graver impression, he said—

"Can *you* forgive me, Mrs. Radcliffe? I ought to have forgotten the incident, and considered how very young you were to be a wife, with quite a mountain of housewifely cares on your inexperienced shoulders, and I annoyed you by dawdling at the breakfast-table."

"Forgive me—oh, say you forgive me, Frank!" repeated Mrs. Fred, passionately.

"Very well, then, I will," he replied, the faint, amused smile returning, "on one condition, and that is, that you keep this nonsense a secret from Fred. He is the best of good fellows, and loves you dearly, and I would not like to have him annoyed because I was not manly enough to forget a hasty utterance to which no real meaning could ever be attached."

Mrs. Fred promised on the stipulation that her husband did not ask for an explanation, and Frank was satisfied. The physician now came in, and saw the nature of the case at a glance—it was a very bad case of pneumonia, for which he prescribed, adding that warmth, quietness, and good nursing were indispensable. He had them all; but his constitution was too weak to resist such a violent attack. In another week's time he was taken away to the Silent Land. His last words were—

"Spoons!—what a funny business that was to go into, wasn't it?"

Mr. Fred was executor and sole legatee under his will, and after an examination of his affairs it was found that he had died possessed of some three thousand pounds, so that he was not so poor as he had seemed to be. According to his request, he was buried in a grave in Highgate Cemetery, on the stone over which the simple inscription, "Mary, *ætat.* 18," had for more than fifteen years attracted much attention. His own name was now added, and the stone may still be there, for aught we know.

Mrs. Fred kept the secret of the fifty-four spoons inviolate, but Betty was not so reticent. When her family grew up she used to admonish them as to indulging in hasty expressions of speech.

"For," said she, not mentioning any names, "I once lived in a family where a gentleman visitor got spoons on the brain, and all through a few hasty words."

J. P. H.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE TEMPEST IN MINNESOTA.—The following is a description of the horrors of the hurricane, as sent by a correspondent from Winona, Minnesota, on January 18, to the New York Herald:

I was in Minnesota after the awful massacres of ten years ago, when the red wave of Indian invasion swept over the smiling land, and left it a waste of ashes soaked with blood; but the scalping-knife and bullet of the Sioux did not do such havoc as the snows have wrought this year, nor were all the tortures of the red fiends productive of more agony than I have witnessed within the past ten days. What has been suffered and how many have been slain has not yet been ascertained, for the settlements are far apart and communication is difficult; but by every mail come particulars that chill the blood, and we can now fairly estimate the extent of the calamity.

Up to that fatal Tuesday, at whose mention many a heart shall ache in Minnesota for years to come, there had been winter weather of the usual sort, clear, cold, with occasional storms of snow, some of which had seriously blockaded the railroads, and induced considerable suffering from scarcity of fuel.

TUESDAY, THE 7TH.

was a lovely and mild day. The sun was bright and the air balmy. Every pulse of the country was astir under the genial influence, and the wild swans that clanged overhead once or twice from their meres must have seen the prairie roads alive with teams. The farmers were all out at the nearest settlement. They were getting short of fuel; there was but a handful of flour at the bottom of the barrel; not a scrap of meat was left. But the snows had ceased, their shaggy little horses were well again, so every farmer hitched his team for the town. In the little cottages of wood were women and children; the school-houses were full of little ones. Such was the country, thus its dwellers, when the blow fell. Nature would seem to have arrogated to herself all the savage attributes which had marked her first children there, their careful and patient watch for an easy opportunity, and their sudden and

RELENTLESS ONSLAUGHT.

So utterly unprepared were the people for the change in the weather, and so suddenly did it come upon them, that one man at Winnebago City describes it as "if a man had clapped his hands—so, and the snow came in our faces." Knowing what the hurricane boded, men leaped into their sleighs, and with voice and lash urged their cowering horses out into the storm. Then the work of death began. For more than fifty hours, till late on Thursday, the freezing wind and falling snow continued. It was not a steady fall of snow, but

A HOWLING HURRICANE,

the wind sometimes attaining a speed of twenty-eight, thirty, or thirty-two miles. The snow came in fitful furries, with a wild screech and a stinging whiz. The thermometer fell steadily, till at Champlain it registered fifty-four degrees below zero. At other places the mercury or spirit marked from eight to forty-two degrees below. Some of the farmers who set out soon found that if they valued life they must turn back. They were enveloped in sheets of snow that blinded them. The wind came so fiercely that they were fain to stop and turn round till a momentary lull came. The road—why, the level prairie was all road now, without one track of wheel or runner to indicate the path of safety. Wherever there was a slight knoll or a tree the driving snow-sleet curled round it and broke over it like yeasty billows over a wreck, and far to leeward grew up drifts of eccentric form. Then the snorting horses that toiled along, pressing with their heaving flanks closer to each other for warmth and dumb protection and sympathy, refused to go forward; the driver felt himself becoming listless, his cold limbs were growing warm, and warned of the

SWIFT COMING OF DEATH,

he turned and retraced his steps. Happy they who did so betimes! There were many who held on stubbornly till it was too late. There were many more who, goaded on by a dreadful fear of the fate of their wives and little ones, left alone in their frail citadels, forced on through the drifts that grew deeper at every step and cold that became more intense every moment. And there were others who grew weary of the contest, and, lying down in their robes, were lulled by the elemental rage into a slumber which knew no awakening. Sometimes the horses gave out, and the unhappy driver, benumbed and chilled, his movements impeded by his heavy clothing, had to abandon his team and take to the drifts. The moans and shrieks of the horses that found themselves thus deserted by their masters are said by some few who survived such scenes to have been agonizing to hear. And at their homes things were no better. There was perhaps a scanty supply of fuel in the corner and but a day's food in the larder. Night trod closely on the heels of noon. Perhaps the mother was alone with her suckling child, her husband ten miles away in one direction, her children two miles away in another. These hapless parents suffered countless deaths. The wooden buildings creaked and

ROCKED IN THE SWING OF THE STORM

like ships at sea. The timbers cracked with the frost like rifles. Beads of frost stood on every piece of woodwork, the small panes of glass were so thick with ice that there was no chance that the lamp set in the casement could send its feeble light to the belated strugglers without. It was impossible to open the doors so high had the drifts become. The fire grew low, though it was replenished with the scanty furniture. Day succeeded to darkness, but the day was as the night. Only the chimney of the house appeared above the drifts. The poor woman knew that her children lay dead, hand in hand, on the prairie, and that her husband's corpse was somewhere entombed in a giant drift. The little baby's blue lips were laid against her empty breast; the soul had sped from between them in a little cloud of frozen vapor. She lay down and died, and the relenting winds wafted through the apertures of the room a decent drift of diamond snow for her winding sheet. These pictures, terrible as they may appear to the readers of the Herald, who sit by warm fires and find the music of the snow as it tinkles against the glass a musical and a cheerful sound, are less than the reality. The advance of death was like that of a torturer, who comes with all his horrid engines to the victim bound at the stake. Only they were to be envied who met a swifter fate in the raging storm without, and were spared the sight of their children dying before their eyes of hunger as well as of cold.

ON THE RAILROADS

there was not absolute suffering. Of course trains were snowed-in for days in drifts that towered to the telegraph wires, and passengers had to shiver and be scantily fed. But this was only a trifle.

When Friday, the 16th, came, the sun rose upon a land of snow and silence. Drifts many feet deep and many square miles in extent were there. Here and there the chimney of a house stood up like a tombstone in a vast cemetery. The land lay like a corpse under a winding-sheet that had moulded itself into occasional wrinkles over the dead limbs or set features. Now came the giant labor of clearing away the giant drifts and setting free the the imprisoned trains, and the sadder task of tracing through the prairies the steps of the dead. Everywhere they were found lying still and statue-like in

THE ICY EMBRACE OF DEATH.

Sometimes the searchers would find man and horses together, the former lying dead, wrapped in his robes, with the whip in his hand, in the sleigh, one horse down, the other standing in the spot where he was fastened by his partner's fall till he shared his partner's fate. Sometimes the sleigh was found overturned, with the traces cut. Then to the right or left would be discovered the driver, who had wandered round in a despairing circle to die. Occasionally the beasts showed in their dilated nostrils, widely spread lips, and staring eyes, the signs of mortal terror. And the men, too, were sometimes Laocoons of ice—statues of writhing despair. But, as a rule, death came quietly, as it generally does in these cases, first robbing the victim of the consciousness of approaching death, which begets an agonized struggle for life, and stilling him with a stupor said to be as delicious as it is deadly.

THE DEATH ROLL

cannot yet be made up with any reasonable degree of certainty. We are only now getting detailed reports from the nearer settlements, and it will be fully a week ere these are so complete as to be trustworthy. Many of the missing will not be found till spring; but it is safe to set down all the missing as dead. After carefully collating the various reports received thus far, and making all allowance for the remaining parts of the State, I am led to conclude that the loss of life in Minnesota will range from two hundred and fifty to three hundred. It is just possible, though not probable, that the higher figure may be reached. Almost all of these are men, and the very large proportion of them fathers of families in straitened circumstances. The surviving widows and children will thus be left without means of support of any description. The charitable of the East will here find an object for their sympathies.

DECEASE OF LORD LYTTON BULWER.—Lord Lytton, better known as Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer, died at Knebworth, Hertfordshire, England, on Saturday last, January 18th. He was sixty-seven years old.

☞ We sincerely regret the death of the King of the Sandwich Islands. As he left no heirs, his body will probably be eaten by strangers.

☞ An exchange notices a death caused by the accidental falling of a brick upon the head of a man who was passing under a scaffolding, while a building was being erected. An inquest was held and the coroner brought in a verdict as follows:—"Death caused by softening of the brain in consequence of the accidental falling of a brick upon the man's head."

☞ There is one boy in Danbury who didn't get anything in his stocking Christmas. He left a pan of ashes on the front stairs, to follow an organ grinder, and a moment later his indulgent father came crashing out of the front door and down the front stoop, accompanied by that pan and its contents, and looking, for all the world, like a real god riding in the clouds. For a few moments that boy thought he had a pile-driver for an ancestor.

☞ A school girl in one of the rural districts of Pittsfield was overheard trying to convince a school-fellow that she liked him better than she did some other urchin of whom he seemed jealous. "Of course I like you better than I do Bill," said she, "for don't I miss words in my spelling lesson on purpose, so as to be down to the foot of the class where you are."

☞ Recently at a trial of considerable interest in Rome, where the court room was crowded, the pickpockets let loose a trained bird, which sailed around the heads of the audience, attracting their attention, giving ample time for the pickpockets to relieve the pockets of the audience.

☞ A boy in the book-room of the Commonwealth office, in Topeka, loaded the foreman's pipe with powder. The pipe was discharged; so was the boy. The foreman thinks he will ultimately recover the sight of one eye.

☞ A young drug clerk committed suicide in Bristol, a few days ago. At the inquest the coroner asked a fellow-clerk of the deceased if he knew of any cause for the suicide. "No," was the reply; "he was getting along nicely, and was going to be married next month." "Going to be married, was he?" exclaimed the coroner. "That will do. We've got at the bottom of this business."

☞ A letter from Dallas, Texas, to the Houston Age, says that twelve "Indian" cattle thieves were lately caught in one of the western counties and hung to a limb of a tree, because there was no "limb of the law" to plead for them. "Before hanging them their faces were scrubbed, and eleven of the twelve did not *pan* out as Indians—they being unprotected orphans from Kansas mostly."

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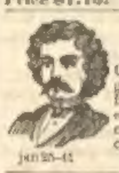

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WIT AND HUMOR.

ON THE ICE.

Maria Ann went to the front door, last evening, to see if the afternoon paper had come. She had been delivering a short address to me concerning what she is pleased to term my "cold molasses style" of moving around. As she opened the door she remarked, "I like to see a body move quickly, prompt, emphatic—" that was all; but I heard some one bumping down the stairs in a most prompt and emphatic manner, and I reached the door just in time to see my better-half sliding across the sidewalk in a sitting posture. I suggested, as she limped back to the door, that there might be such a thing as too much celerity; but she did not seem inclined to carry on the conversation, and I started for my office.

Right in front of me, on the slippery sidewalk, strode two independent knights of St. Crispin. They were talking over their plans for the future, and, as I overtook them, I heard one of them say, "I have only my two hands to depend upon; but that is fortune enough for any man who is not afraid to work. I intend to paddle my own canoe. I believe I can make my way through the world—" his feet slid out from under him, and he came down in the shape of a big V. I told him he could never make his way through the world in that direction, unless he came down harder, and that if he did he would go through among the "heathen Chinee," and he was really grateful for the interest I manifested. He invited me to a place where the ice never forms on the sidewalk.

Then I slid along behind a loving couple on their way to hear Madame Anna Bishop. Their hands were frozen together. Their hearts beat as one. Said he, "My own, I shall think nothing of hard work, if I can make you happy. It shall be my only aim to surround you with comfort; my sympathy shall lighten every sorrow, and through the path of life I will be your stay and your support; your—" he stopped. His speech was too flowery for this climate; and as I passed them she was trying to lift him up.

Two lawyers coming from the court-house next attracted my attention. "Ah," said one, "Judge Foster would rule that out. We must concede the first two points. We can afford to do it if the evidence sustains us in the third; but on this position we must take our firm stand,"—his time was up. I left him moving for a new trial.

I mused. What a lesson the ice teaches us. How easily is humanity controlled by circumstances—and the attractions of gravitation. What a sermon might be based—I got up and took the middle of the street to prevent further accident.

A VERY CANDID MAN.

The Sunday Herald (Indianapolis) relates the following:

A rather good thing—we don't vouch for its truth, however—is told at the expense of an estimable citizen of Bartholomew county, whose only fault is a tendency to tarry longer than is sanitary at the wine when it moveth itself aright. Notwithstanding this infirmity, Joe is held in high esteem by his neighbors, who honor him for his industry, truthfulness, candor and other manly virtues. One night, during a protracted meeting, Joe straggled into the neighborhood church, a little drunker than anybody had ever seen him before, and came to an anchor among a herd of unregenerate goats on the back seats. The heat of the room and the fumes of the liquor induced a gentle somnolence, half-sleeping and half-waking, during which he heard but heeded not the earnest words of the preacher. Finally, however, the inquiry, "Where now is the drunkard?" propounded in a louder tone, thoroughly aroused our fuddled friend, and he promptly responded, in equally clear tones: "Here I am!"

The preacher was disconcerted. "I was not alluding to you personally, Mr. H——," he explained. "The remark was general." "Yer 'pology's 'cepted," replied Joe, grandly, and the preacher continued. After a few moments he said: "Where, now, is the hypocrite?" This again aroused Joe. "There he is, over there!" he replied, pointing with his finger. "Tom Peasley, why don't you answer when your name's called?" This was too much, and Joe was snaked out by a couple of deacons. As he was going out he was heard to mutter: "I never go back on nothin', I don't. But there's that Tom Peasley; *hain't* he got cheek?"

A BOY'S JOURNAL.

Dorry, a boy six years old, thinks he will do as other men have done.

March 12—Have resolved to keep a journal.

March 13—Had rost befe for dinner, and cabage and potato and appel sawse and rice puding. I do not like rice puding when it is like ours. Charley Slack's kind is rele good. Mush and sirup for tea.

March 19—Forgit what did. John and me saved our pie to take to schule.

March 21—Forgit what did. Gridel cake for breakfast. Debby didn't fry enuff.

March 24—This is Sunday. Corn befe for dinnir. Studdied my Bibel lesson. Aunt Issy said I was gredy. Have resolved not to think so much about things to ete. Wish I was a better boy. Nothing pertikeler for tea.

March 25—Forgit what did.

March 27—Forgit what did.

March 29—Played.

March 31—Forgit what did.

April 1—Have dissided not to keep a journal enny more.

A BAGGAGE-SMASHER'S DREAM.

A certain baggage-smasher on the Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad had a fearful attack of nightmare the other evening. He dreamed that some man came along to his car with a splendid new trunk that had never been touched. And the dreamer got hold of that trunk and soused it down upon the floor three or four times, and jumped on it, and hacked it up with an ax, and spilt coal-oil on it, and smeared it with chalk-marks. And then he dreamed that he pitched it out of the car, and was about to explode a keg of gunpowder under it, when the engine of the down train struck him, and he awoke. He found his wife standing over him with a chair, and rapping him on the head with earnestness. In his sleep he had hold of the baby's crib and had been waltzing around the room with it, ramming it up against the wall, and pounding it with the pitcher, and trying to heave it out of the window, while the infant yelled like a brigade of Shoshone Indians. It was the concussion of the chair in the hands of the indignant mother that made him dream about the locomotive striking him. When his friends now ask him the meaning of those bumps upon his forehead, he says nothing, but seizes the nearest valise, and goes through all the exercises that he dreamed about.

A DISREPUTABLE scoffer at science, alluding to an article entitled "How to See Down a Well," which occupied a column in a scientific journal, says: "We could have furnished the desired information in a much shorter space. For instance, if a well is out o' doors and covered, and you want to see down it, take the said cover off and look in. The thing is very simple when you know how it is done."

SOME women are so extremely anxious. There was that affectionate little wife of Smith's, for instance, out in Pittsburg. She saw Smith take down his gun to clean it, and when she observed that he blew in the muzzle while he held back the hammer with his foot, she ran down-stairs and bought a widow's cap and thirty-seven yards of black barege, and then took it to a dressmaker to ascertain whether it would be more becoming made with a train, or short, with flounces. Smith still lives.

"WHAT do you call that?" indignantly asked a customer at a cheap restaurant, pointing out an object that he had discovered in his plate of hash. "Wristband, with a sleeve-button attached, sir," said the waiter briskly. "Well, do you consider that a proper thing for a man to find in his hash?" asked the customer in wrath. "Good heavens, sir!" cried the waiter, "would you expect to find a ten-dollar silk umbrella in a fifteen-cent plate of hash?"

THE DOLOUR OF MARGARET.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Arise, she said, and away, away,
For lo! the glorious god of day
Upclimbs the eastern sky;
Fly fast to the est by the distant sea,
And bring ere the day flee dead to me,
A mother's pride and joy.

For a sense of danger haunts my breast,
And my heart is filled with a strange unrest
As I think on him. Away!
One parting kiss from those lips of light,
And I flew through the yawning gates of night,
Far into the smiling day.

Fast over the frosty ringing ground,
Through forests whose trees uprose around,
And fled like ghosts behind;
Like a stream of light through an evening sky
When the God of Autumn is drawing nigh;
Like a leaf on the Winter wind;

Through the dusk and gold of the early dawn,
My charger and I sped madly on,
On our errand of fear and love;
Till the Morn rode into the realms of Noon,
And the sun like a ball of flame, effusion
Stood still in the sky above.

Then we gained the brow of a mighty hill,
Where the clatter and tramp grew suddenly still
In the ocean's distant roar:
A wild glad neigh o'er the sand plain rung,
And we stood by the side of the cot that hung
On the brink of the lonely shore.

Full sadly I lifted a little form,
And pressing it to my bosom warm,
Turned sadl toward the far home.
Mournfully on and on we sped,
Till the blue in the western sky grew red,
And the forests grew gray with gloom.

But at last I stood by the home-cot's door,
As the sun with muttering clouds veiled o'er,
Burned out in the darkening west:
With my burden I entered as best I might;
And a mother's pride and joy that night,
Lay dead on a mother's breast.

MERLIN.

An Unexpected Amputation.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ANNIE H. JEROME.

A servant found it under the front door early in the morning—a large, coarse sheet of letter paper intricately folded, and sealed with a red wafer. The simple superscription, "Charles Glent, Wildlands," was legible enough, despite the cramped, irregular penmanship. So also were the following lines, destitute of date, address and signature:—

"Years ago you did me a kindness, which I vowed never to forget. In return I now pen the warning that your house will be entered to-morrow night. It is well known to a certain thieving gang that you have a large sum of money by you. Be wise, and have it removed to a place of safety. Above all things, employ some trustworthy person to act for you. So surely as you neglect this charge, suspicions will be excited, and your life possibly pay the forfeit of your folly.

"Be careful also to provide a good and open reason for any journey you may deem it advisable should be made, for I assure you every one of your movements is closely watched. And lastly, do not be foolhardy enough to give battle. The money is all that is wanted, and no personal injury will be offered if you keep quiet. Whether or not your servants have been tampered with, I can't say."

Heavy lines of anxiety marked Mr. Glent's fine forehead as he read, and it was not surprising, the region being, at that period, a rough one in every way. Its locality and the circumstances which sent him there with his family it is needless to mention.

"Strange how the thing ever leaked out," he muttered to himself, "but I suppose through Oscar's folly. And now what am I to do? Oscar will be off in ten minutes," glancing from the letter to the pale, jaded countenance of his dissipated step-son, who stood at a little distance making hasty preparations for a journey. "And perhaps it is as well—those gambling hells have sunk him too low for any honest employment."

The entrance of the two remaining members of his family, with the hurried adieux and departure of Oscar Layne, ended, for the time, his uncomfortable reflections. But the morning cup of coffee, just then served, fully discussed, he passed the letter to his wife and daughter.

Mrs. Glent sat in mute horror. The daughter, a noble looking creature of some twenty years, was stronger nerved. She reread the letter slowly and critically.

"To-morrow," she commented thoughtfully. "That may either mean to-night or to-morrow night, papa. You see there is no date. We don't know whether it was written twelve or twenty-four hours ago."

"You are right. That never occurred to me. We have even less time than I supposed. But I see nothing for it but to let the money go."

"It is too badly needed, papa, to be quietly yielded to those wretches," Bessie quietly answered.

"True. But what is to be done? If you and your mother were not here I would risk my life in taking it to the —— bank. But as it is, I can't conscientiously do so, and there is no one upon whom I can call."

"Yes, there is; I will take it."

"You!" exclaimed both parents, utterly aghast for the moment.

"Yes, I am going," was the cool rejoinder.

"You are demented, Bessie!" cried her step-mother. "It is far better to lose the money than for you to run so great a risk."

"Determined, mamma, not demented," smiled Bessie, as her father said:—

"You forget, Bessie, that you will have a drive of three miles over a road too lonely to make you feel quite at ease, considering the character of those about us."

"I am too much like yourself to be a coward," she answered firmly. "And indeed I don't believe there is the slightest danger, except in imagination. My best protection, I think, will be our largest market basket, and that I shall take and bring home well filled. Your vest pistol would not, however, be out of place in my pocket, and I will take it also, since I can handle it as dexterously as yourself."

A few more objections were urged, only to be skilfully overruled, and Mr Glent, feeling also that there was no actual danger, at last fully consented.

"Why not send for assistance, Charles?" suggested the not very perspicacious Mrs. Glent.

"That would never do in such a region and under such circumstances, unless we intended to keep an armed force about us," Bessie answered promptly, Mr. Glent echoing her opinion most empatically.

Owing to various trying delays, nearly two hours passed before Bessie could start. As she left the sitting-room for the light wagon at the door, a small hatchet which Oscar had that morning carelessly thrown on a chair attracted her eye. She picked it up half-absently, and with a glance at the keen edge, slipped the handle under her belt.

"What are you going to do with that?" Mr. Glent asked, as she concealed it beneath her sacque.

"I don't know," she laughed. "It had a friendly look, and I was seized by an irresistible impulse to take possession of it, without any actual reason for doing so. Somehow it is in high favor with me."

Mr. Glent smiled.

"You are a brave girl, Bess."

"And I have a right to be," was the proud rejoinder. "My grandfather was a brave soldier, and you are a brave civilian, or you would never be here."

The morning was a deliciously balmy one, and Bessie drove fearlessly on, enjoying the wild scenery about her, though eye and ear were ever on the alert for possible dangers. The quick trot, which had scarcely been broken from the moment of starting, soon brought her to the wildest part of her journey, midway between Wildlands and ——.

Immense forest trees on either side the narrow road, with irregular, massive piles of frowning rocks, gave a sombre gloom to the spot, which rendered it peculiarly adapted to the marauding villain's purpose. She had just penetrated its deepest shadows, when her quick, watchful eye caught sight, for a moment, of some stealthily moving object a short distance ahead—whether man or beast she could not decide.

"No, I will not fire even if I should be assaulted" she hastily thought, withdrawing her hand from the pistol she had involuntarily grasped. "It might invite worse."

And with beating heart she slipped the hatchet from belt to knee. She was none too quick. The next instant a masked man darted from behind the rocks and seized the horse's head. Unused to such rough treatment, the high-spirited brute plunged so violently as to shake off the villain's grasp. But nothing daunted he caught the shaft, and in spite of the speed at which the creature started forward succeeded, with the ease and dexterity of one skilled in feats of the kind, in seizing the dashboard with one hand, and the body of the wagon just below with the other. But at the very moment he was in the act of springing up, the little hatchet's gleaming edge smote just at the wrist, the hand near her foot, and with a groan he sprung or fell backward, leaving on the wagon floor a ghastly proof of the attack in a bleeding hand.

It all passed like a dream, and half unconscious of the shocking reality, Bessie drove for a little, wildly and unthinkingly on. But before —— was entered her mind had regained its usual activity. Checking the animal's mad career, she shudderingly bent down and wrapped the ghastly object at her feet in a couple of old newspapers fortunately found under the cushions. Then erasing as well as she could all evidences of her adventure, she proceeded toward ——, and in a short time was quietly, though with pallid cheek, transacting the business calling her thither. That done, she asked for one of the gentleman to whom she was well known, and related her story.

"I firmly believe the letter was a decoy," she concluded, "and also, that the whole was the work of one individual."

"Undoubtedly, and that that individual was no rough you may rest assured," returned the gentleman.

"Still," said Bessie, "I shall act with all my intended caution, as we may be mistaken."

"You surely will not venture to return alone to Wildlands?"

"Certainly. My late assailant will have full enough to do to look after his wound, and I have little fear of any other, as the road is not infested by highwaymen."

The conference continued a few minutes longer, and then the matter was carried to the authorities. A plaster cast of the fair, muscular hand, which it was plainly evident had never graced the person of a rough, was quickly taken, and the agent soon at his secret work.

Not many hours later Mr. Glent was lifting Bessie and her well-filled basket from the wagon.

"I made the purchases, considering it safer to do so," she remarked, "but I suspect time will prove me to have been needlessly cautious." And she briefly detailed the events of the morning.

"And what of the return journey?" he anxiously asked—a deeper shadow on his face than Bessie thought the occurrence warranted.

"I met with nothing to alarm—not a trace of the villain remained."

As Bessie expected, undisturbed quiet reigned night after night.

But one day the little keen-eyed agent made his appearance at Wildlands, and asked for Mr. Glent. He seemed uneasy, and made his business known as quickly as possible.

"We have found our man, sir," he said abruptly. "Plenty of mother-wit in him, too, or he would not have eluded us so long. But he got pretty low down, and ventured back to our place, and last night at play, got into a difficulty which ended in a bad wound. He is dying now, sir, and wants to see you."

"Who is he?" Mr. Glent asked with a certain grave anxiety.

"If you will excuse me, sir. He begged me to bring you without telling his name," the agent returned uneasily, "and I never refuse the dying."

For one instant they gazed into each other's eyes. It was enough, Mr. Glent went unquestioningly.

He was taken to one of the low dens in which —— abounded, and to the bedside of the dying man.

"And so my secret fears are realized; it is you, Oscar?" he said, taking the wan hand the poor wretch feebly and half doubtingly extended.

"It is, but don't! don't reproach me!" he gasped. "I have enough of that here," touching his breast. "Too much! too much! Ah! if I could only live over one year of my life—one little year!"

"That you cannot, my poor Oscar; but you can—"

"I know—I have heard it many a time from the preachers, but I don't believe it. I'm the man my deeds have made me. The life I loved here I shall love there—and—and I LOVE EVIL! Goodness disgusts me even in the midst of fear!" And overcome by the excitement, he sank back exhausted. Reviving a little presently he panted—

"I wanted to tell you—I wanted to ask you to forgive me—forgive me for my mother, too—I would not kill her by bringing her here. You see it was a debt of honor—and I had to have the money by fair means or foul, and so I wrote the letter, I wrote it very carefully—very carefully, and all happened as I designed, except—" And he moved the maimed arm significantly. After a moment's silence he resumed with the same panting breath. "I supposed you would send the money to ——, as there was no other safe place, and I knew Bess would take it, if I made it—a matter of life—and death for you to go. It was this way, you see—I did not want to fight for it—did not want to fight my stepfather. But I anticipated an easy victory over Bess by means of my superior strength. But, she was too quick for me. Poor Bess, she got the hand that wrote the letter! Forgive me—my mother."

That was all. Death claimed him.

VERY REMARKABLE.

ASTOUNDING MESMERIC POWER.

[From the Homeward Mail, of India.]

A curious case of mesmerism is recorded by the civil surgeon of Hoshungabad. A young woman named Nunnee, aged twenty-four, was married some twelve years ago; she however did not go to her husband's house for two years afterward. After staying with him eight days she suddenly became insensible, and remained so for two or three days. She was taken back to her mother, and soon got well. Then follows a very remarkable history. During the next four or five years she never entered her husband's house without falling insensible and remaining so. He was very kind and attentive to her; she liked him, but whenever he came into her presence she at once sank into this state. This went on till she became emaciated and exhausted, and at last her parents applied to the Court for a separate maintenance for her.

While she was in Court the husband entered, and she instantly became insensible, and was carried to the hospital, where the case was carefully attended to by Dr. Cullen, in March, this year. While in this state her pulse was even, breathing soft, her body pliant, but she could eat nothing. Experiments were carefully made to see if there was no trick about it. While she was in bed her husband was muffled up, and made to walk through the ward. She said she felt he was near her, and she was by no means well, but had not seen him anywhere about. Next day this experiment was repeated, and she actually became insensible, as before. When the husband left the place she recovered. The experiment as to the influence of the husband's presence was tried in all sorts of ways.

He was made to pass behind her, and to be near her, in a separate ward, but this had no effect, but whenever he was brought to look on her face, though muffled up, or disguised as a policeman, as a sepoy, and so forth, she was at once influenced. The experiments continued for about a month, and the conclusion was that the husband unconsciously mesmerized her. The Court came to the conclusion that it was impossible that she could live with him, and a separate allowance was ordered. The husband was asked to try if he could not remove the effect, seeing that he had the power to cause it, but he was quite frightened at the idea of having the power, and could not control it in any way.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double* rates on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

O. P. E., (Carbondale, Tenn.), asks: "1st. When a story is written to be published in book form, is it necessary to furnish a complete manuscript to the publisher for inspection? 2d. Are lightning and storms more prevalent in Florida and Mexico than in northern latitudes? 3d. What is the fare per mile on canals in the United States? Last, but not least, what do you think of my writing?" 1st. Certainly. No publisher would be willing to risk publishing a book without having seen the whole of it, unless the author's name were a guarantee for its fitness for publication. 2d. Lightning storms occur most frequently in the tropics, diminishing North and South. The rain-fall is greater in Florida than further north, but on the Pacific coast the rain fall increases northwardly. 3d. We do not know of any established rate of fare. There being little or no passenger travel on the canals in our days, there is nothing to fix a settled rate of fare. Your handwriting has the elements of a good one, and might be made such with proper effort at improvement.

H. M. H., (Port Hope, Canada), writes: "I would like you to answer for me, to oblige a friend, what is the origin of 'Giving the mitten?'" We answered this question last week. Please refer to our last number.

M. E. Mc., (Ala.). We would gladly tell you what to do, could we learn the cause of your trouble. But such an affliction may have several causes, and it would be best for you to apply to an able physician. It might be that in this way you could gain some relief.

P. L. D. (Stone Church, N. Y.,) writes: "Will you please answer the following: 1st. Two men, A. and B. wanted to trade horses. A offered to trade with B for $50 to boot. B offered to trade with A for $35 to boot. As they could not agree, they left it to C, who said they should split the difference. What is B to pay A, $8.50 or $17.50 or what? 2d. Of what kind of grapes are raisins made, and how are they cured for the market? 3d. How many of the Presidents and Vice Presidents of the United States are now living, and what are their names?" 1st. Questions of this kind should be addressed to the riddler column. The difference between the two propositions seems to be $35. Half of this sum, $17.50, should be paid by B to A. 2d. It is probable that all grapes would make raisins, if properly treated, though some might be of very little value. Raisins are made of grapes grown in Spain, Turkey, and other parts of Southern Europe. The best are made by cutting half through the stalk of the ripe bunches and leaving them hang to shrink and dry in the sun. These are called raisins of the sun, or Muscatels. Others are made by cutting the branches from the vines, treating them with lye, and leaving them to drain and dry in the sun. 3d. None of the elected Presidents are now living, except General Grant. Two Vice Presidents who attained the Presidential chair are living, Millard Fillmore and Andrew Johnson. The Vice Presidents living are J. C. Breckinridge, Hannibal Hamlin and Schuyler Colfax.

M. J. W. writes: "Being a constant reader of your paper, I wish to ask a few questions. 1st. Where can I get a dictionary of the French language, with the definitions in English, and at what price? 2d. What is meant by the seven wonders of the world? 3d. What do you think of my writing?" 1st. You can get one through any book store. We can procure von Gaec's *for* $1.25. 2d. They were the Pyramids of Egypt, the Hanging Gardens of Semiramis at Babylon, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, the Mausoleum, or Tomb of King Mausolus, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Pharos or Light-house at Alexandria, and the Statue of Jupiter, by Phidias, at Athens. 3d. We think it very poor.

W. O. G. writes: "1st. How long has Queen Victoria been Queen of England? 2d. How long ago did her husband die? 3d. Who was King or Queen before? 4th. Who was Emperor of France before Napoleon I.? 5th. Can you give me a receipt how to make good mucilage and cement?" 1st. Since 1837. 2d. In 1861. 3d. William IV. 4th. Louis XVI. 5th. There are a great many cements. It depends on what purpose you wish it for. For mucilage, dissolve gum arabic in water.

MINNIE, (Philadelphia,) writes: "Would you be so kind as to answer the following questions—1st. What is the greatest depth an animal can live in the sea? 2d. Does nitrogen in any way support combustion? and can an animal live in it (nitrogen)? 3d. Where is the indigo-plant most extensively grown; and how is the indigo that we receive, formed? 4th. At what point in Norway does the sun shine all the time? 5th. Is it ever too cold to snow? 6th. Where is Lake Lugano? 7th. What is the origin of the word strawberry? 8. Where and when were the first Irish potatoes found?" 1st. Animal life has been found at the greatest depth to which ocean dredging has yet been extended. Professor E. Forbes, not many years ago, pronounced 300 fathoms of depth as the zero of animal life. Yet since then star fish and other animals have been found at over 1000 fathoms, and lower forms of life as deep as 2400 fathoms, or nearly 2½ miles. 2d. No. Combustion cannot take place in pure nitrogen, nor can animal life be sustained by it. Ordinary combustion is a chemical combination of oxygen with the combustible, and free oxygen must be present for it to continue. Free oxygen is also absolutely necessary to the continuance of animal life. 3d. Indigo is a dye extracted from various plants, found principally in India and America. The plants are steeped in water, which causes fermentation of the juices. From this fermented juice a blue precipitate settles. This is dried and pressed, and is the indigo of commerce. 4th. At no point. In the upper regions of Norway the sun does not set in midwinter, the phenomenon called "the midnight sun" being then visible. 5th. We think not. In Artic explorations it is found to snow in extremely cold weather, colder than we ever know here. 6th. Lake Lugano is situated in Switzerland, but extends into Italy, between Lakes Maggiore and Como. It is surrounded by mountains, and the scenery is very fine. 7th. Strawberry means the straying plant, (from Anglo Saxon *strew*.) It is so called from its runners, which stray from the parent plant in all directions. 8th. Potatoes are supposed to be native to South America. The first are supposed to have been brought from the neighborhood of Quito to Spain, early in the 16th century.

SKINK (Ripley, Miss.,) writes: "I have been a reader of your paper for years, and feel no hesitancy in submitting the following questions: I have been a wild and reckless youth, having been raised up without any one to care for me. My parents died when I was quite young, and left in the hands of my guardian sufficient of this world's goods to enable me to lead a high life for three or four years. I am now about twenty-six, and my money is all gone. Yet I have a situation which is paying me about six hundred dollars a year. I have reformed and have concluded to marry, and wish to know whether you think my salary is sufficient to support a wife respectably? The young lady to whom I am engaged, I believe is perfectly devoted to me. But there is another 'fellow' who is paying his addresses to her, who has always led a moral life, consequently the old folks are more in favor of him than of me. Now I wish to know what course to purse. Would you advise me to marry my lady-love against the inclination of her parents or endeavor to gain their confidence? I have always loved her, and never will love another. What must I do?" Prove to the parents that you have really reformed and they may no longer object to you. As it is they but show their good sense in objecting to a man who has led the life which you acknowledge, and it would be a strange evidence of reform for you to induce their daughter to marry you against their wishes. We hope that in spending all your money you have not got rid of your character also. If so you cannot expect to build up a new one without time and strong endeavor. As to whether your salary will support a wife or not you must know better than we, as you know the cost of living in your district, as also your own and her requirements. If you have her verdict in your favor, you have one strong point, and no doubt can gain over the "old folks." If you can make them believe in the sincerity and durability of your repentance.

E. R., (Washington, Iowa,) says: "Will you tell me who the maid of Saragossa was?" In the celebrated siege of Saragossa, in 1808, the women became very efficient in aiding and sustaining the men. One young woman in particular, finding a battery deserted, vowed she would never leave it while a Frenchman was before the town, fired a gun with her own hands, and shamed the men back to her support. She is known as Augustina of Saragossa.

HURRICANE SAL, (Lockeville, Ark.,) asks: "With many thanks to you for answering my questions, I after mature deliberation ask a few more. 1st. What was Esau's birthright? 2d. When the Flood was sent upon the earth, everything living, outside Noah's ark, was drowned. Was Beelzebub drowned too? If not, where did his Satanic majesty reside while mother earth was getting over her dampness? 3d. Did the Flood extend over the whole world, or only over the part inhabited by folks? 4th. Who is Darwin, and has he ever written a book, or is it merely a hypothesis? 5th. If you wished a piece of music published, where would you send it, and to whom?" 1st. His special rights or privileges as the first born, to be the future head of the family, inherit the father's estate, &c. In England, or any country where the law of primogeniture obtains, you would have no difficulty in understanding this. 2d. We do not wish to answer this class of questions—or have them asked us—as we do not wish to offend the religious feelings or even the religious prejudices of any of our readers. 3d. That is a mooted question. 4th. Darwin is a noted English scientist, of great learning and ability. He has published several books, which have caused much excitement in the world of science. His main theory is that animals are not directly created, but that each species is developed from some preceding species, and that man was thus developed from the lower animals. 5th. Send it to your nearest music publisher.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RECEIPTS.

SUPERIOR BEEF TO USE COLD FROM POOR PIECES.—Soak in warm, not hot, water, until as fresh as desired when boiled. Then cover it with water, and boil slowly; skim the pot as long as any scum rises, after which cover the pot closely, that the condensed steam may fall in the pot, and boil steadily, until the meat will break in bits if lifted with a fork; when sufficiently tender, skim it out, remove the bone, and mix the fat and lean together; put it in a wide earthen dish, deep enough to hold it; skim the fat from the liquor, and boil the liquor down; when sufficiently reduced, pour it over the meat; lay over it a flat cover, and put on a weight of fifteen or twenty pounds, and let it stand all night. When wanted for the table, cut it in thin slices, as you would head-cheese. The jelly of the liquor will make it firm, and, if properly mixed, the fat and lean will be in right proportion through the whole. This is an excellent way to manage the poor pieces of corned beef—the gristle will be tender, and every part good. The gelatine of the muscles will be saved; though not considered particularly nutritious when used alone, it will assist in forming the meat into a solid mass, making it both agreeable to the eye and taste. If the beef is much salt, it should be soaked forty-eight hours, or longer if not sufficiently freshened, to allow all the water to evaporate, and the jelly to solidify, without tasting too much of the brine.

FARMER'S FRUIT CAKE.—One cup of sour dried apples, soaked over night and chopped fine; simmer two hours in a cup of molasses; one cup of sugar; one-third of a cup of butter; one-half cup of sour milk; one teaspoonful soda; one of cloves and nutmeg; two eggs beat well together; add the apples stirred up in a cup of flour; add flour till quite stiff.

ROAST TURKEY.—Select a fine, plump, yellow-skinned turkey, weighing from ten to twelve pounds. Examine it thoroughly to see that all the pin feathers are taken out; hold it over a blaze to singe any fine hairs that may remain; wash it thoroughly inside and out, and rub it over with salt. Take the gizzard, heart and liver, put them into cold water, and let them boil until tender. When done, chop them very fine. Take stale bread, or the large Boston crackers, and grate or chop them. Add salt, pepper, and some sweet herb, if liked, to the bread-crumbs; after which beat two eggs with which to moisten the crumbs; add and mix thoroughly with this the chopped "inwards," not forgetting to put in salt and butter. Fill the inside of the turkey with the dressing, taking care that the neck or crop is made to look plump, and sew the openings, drawing the skin tightly together. Then rub a little butter over your turkey, and lay it upon the grate of your meat pan. Cover the bottom of the pan well with boiling water. After a half hour, baste the turkey by pouring over it the gravy that has begun to form in the pan. Repeat the basting once in about fifteen minutes. In an oven of average temperature a twelve-pound turkey will require at least three hours; but every oven has its own way of baking, and the cook must be governed by it.

REMARKS ON ROAST BEEF, ETC.—Most cooks advise heating meat slowly at the first, and afterward, more particularly in roasts, with more rapidity; but our experience is, that if the juices are wanted in the roast, it should be suffered to brown as quickly as possible without burning, and afterward roast as slowly as possible, and have the roast finished by a given time. Boiled fresh beef we put first in hot water; let it boil up once, skim thoroughly and boil gently until tender.

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

SCRIPTURAL ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 43 letters.

My 3, 36, 29, 16, 43, 31, is a book of the New Testament.

My 1, 8, 15, 25, 31, is a person often mentioned in the New Testament.

My 40, 12, 35, 37, 42, 28, is the name of the angel who appeared unto Zacharias at the altar.

My 24, 34, 3, 22, 18, was a king of Judea.

My 26, 15, 39, 17, 2, 31, is a prophet spoken of in Mark.

My 4, 5, 37, 14, 6, 27, is a word used in the fifth verse of the sixth chapter of Matthew.

My 33, 28, 32, 11, 6, 34, 24, 5, 23, is the place spoken of in the New Testament where a noted character was born.

My 1, 2, 21, 10, 11, 41, 20, was the son of Eleazer.

My 13, 17, 29, 36, 23, 11, 26, 30, 31, was the person sent to the Thessalonians to comfort them in their faith.

My 9, 27, 3, 39, 7, 38, 19, 31, is the one whose school the disciple were daily disputing in.

Millerstown, O. J. LOUDENBACK.

CHARADE.

On a fine starry night with the moon shining bright,
And the birds are all gone to rest,
When by the brook walking, true lovers are talking,
And cooing like doves in a nest;
And the sheen in their eyes cause them no more surprise
Than my first, tho' so far away.
You will guess't, I've no fear, for I've mentioned it here,
Unless they have nothing to say.
Then the light of her eyes very sweetly doth rise
To his own before they do part.
If you study these lines several times,
My second to you they'll impart.
As they still linger near to each other so dear
And renew their fond vows of love,
I know they'd be willing, their love notes are trilling,
In my whole forever to rove.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

A vegetable.
A snakelike fish.
A malt liquor.

II.

A useful liquid.
A metal.
A game.
To understand.

Schenectady, N. Y. J. D. G.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

A title of nobility.
A girdle.
Soon.
A fissure.

II.

A noise.
A sly look.
A tree.
Vapor, steam.

J. C.

CHARADE.

Oft in my second my first does dwell.
My whole's a Welsh town—my name now tell?

ALGEBRAICAL PROBLEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

There is a certain number composed of two digits from which if the square of the left hand digit be taken the cube root of its digits will be reversed, and the cube root of the sum of the digits is equal to the square root of their difference. Required the number. ARTEMAS MARTIN.

Erie, Erie Co., Pa.

CONUNDRUMS.

Why is a hen roosting like a weapon? Because it is a fowl-in peace.

Why is a person afflicted with the lumbago like a man smoking a penny cigar? Because his back is bad (baccy's bad.)

☞ When is the soup likely to run out of the saucepan? When there is a leak in it.

☞ What protection has a street car from being struck by lightning? It has a conductor.

☞ When is the weather most like a crockery shop? When it is muggy.

☞ Why is a lovely young lady like a hinge? Because she is something to a-dore.

☞ When is a lover like a tailor? When he presses his suit.

☞ Why is a blunt knife, partially ground, like a young pickpocket? He is a little sharper.

ANSWERS TO LAST

BURIED RIVERS—1, Rhone; 2, Elbe; 3, Thames; 4, Ems; 5, Ganges; 6, Missouri; 7, Po; 8, Tornea; 9, Onega; 10, Duna; 11, Red; 12 Don-Obe; 13, East; 14, Raisin; 15, Nile; 16, Ourthe.

RIDDLE—Christmas.

REBUS—Jealousy—Religion:—JupiteR, EuoidE, AwL, LI (fe), OG, UrI, SapphO, YarN.

ALGEBRAICAL PROBLEM—$20 for the cow, $30 for the ox, and $50 for the horse.

NEIGHBORLY QUESTION—John 69, and William 13 years.

UNDER THE MISTLETOE.

"England expects that e-ver-y man
This day will do his dooty."